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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

HITLER'S occupation of the Rhineland was nicely calculated to create confusion among the League Powers. The French stand firm. They demand Germany's withdrawal before discussion. If Locarno goes, they argue, all security goes. Hitler will know that the *fait accompli* always pays, that the solidarity of the League Powers is a myth. He will be encouraged to a new advance which will be beyond his frontiers. The French have submitted to a series of illegalities; somewhere they must stand, and they have decided that it must be now. British opinion, on the other hand, deplores the violence of Hitler's methods, but accepts his moral right to occupy the Rhineland. It tends, too, to accept with far too much simplicity the reality of the new peace he offers. We discuss Hitler's offer in our leading article and suggest that it would be folly to reply merely by a *non possumus* to Germany and that the sane policy is to invite her back into the League on terms which will do justice to her and ensure that she is a better neighbour.

The French Supporters

The alignment of forces in this contest shows a strong leaning to the French thesis. No State of any importance has expressed wholehearted sympathy with the British attitude, though some, such as Holland and the Scandinavian countries, are doubtless hoping that British efforts may modify the stubbornness of the French. The Little Entente and the Balkan Entente have declared themselves unequivocally for France, and the Poles, whose policy has long been in doubt, are coming down definitely on the French side of the fence. Austria—the present Austrian regime, that is to say—is naturally fearful of Germany and profoundly distrustful of Hitler's belated promises of non-interference. Italy, whose puppet Austria is, will also want a great deal of assurance on this point. Mussolini's attitude to the whole affair is at present non-committal. He does not repudiate his Locarno obligations. But he can hardly be expected to subscribe to the application of sanctions against the aggressor, and the Italian press is mainly engaged in making a *reductio ad absurdum* of the sanctions policy, and in pointing, in particular, to the inconsistency in the British attitude towards Italy and towards Germany. If the

Locarno Powers, who are meeting as we write, cannot agree, and France presses her case on the League Council on Saturday, she will have a heavy backing.

Mussolini's Prospects

Whether or not Mussolini was privy to the Rhineland coup, he can hardly fail to get pleasure and profit from it. It has not only shifted the limelight off his own adventure; it has distracted and divided the League Powers, and given him good grounds for hoping to see the abandonment of sanctions. His acceptance of Geneva's appeal for negotiations does not, of course, bring us any nearer to a settlement. It has been made pretty clear that he will insist on more and not less than M. Laval and Sir Samuel Hoare proposed he should have, more than Abyssinia could possibly be expected to concede, or than the League could consent to without stultifying and disgracing itself. But the question now is whether the League will stand the test that Hitler has put it to. If it does, then Italy must before long lay her terms on the table, and, failing their acceptance, be faced with the stronger pressure of an oil embargo. If the League breaks up—in fact though not necessarily not in form—the Duce may count on having a freer hand for his African war, though, to set against that, his anxieties in Central Europe may be increased. But such a freeing of his hand will obviously not ensure him a decisive victory before the next rains. He will still have the prospect of a long and costly struggle, which, even should it end in the conquest of Abyssinia, may leave him master of a white elephant—or of a more dangerous creature.

Japan's New Government

Japan has at last got its Government. The original intention of Mr. Hirota, the Prime Minister, was to form a ministry of a moderate Liberal complexion. But this was not to the taste of the Army, and he was compelled to drop some of his choices. Party politicians are in a minority in the new Cabinet; there is a General at the War Office, an Admiral at the Admiralty, and among the other members there are four civil servants and a banker. Their programme, it is said, will include relief to agriculturists, who are in pitiable straits, various financial and economic reforms, and the strengthening of the national defences. This last item, we may be sure, will be put first by the army and navy chiefs who dominate the policy of the country, and who have lost none of their influence as a result of the recent mutiny, though there has been a wholesale purge of the Supreme War Council and of other officers of high rank. What they will do with their strengthened "defences"—whether they will use them for more offensive action in China and Mongolia—remains to be seen. The probability is that the Chinese will continue for the present to be dealt with by diplomatic trickery rather than by bullets and bombs. Soviet fears in the Far East are naturally intensified by the ferment into which Hitler has plunged the West. But we doubt whether Japan is really eager to embark on war with Russia.

The Defence Debate

In the Defence debate the Opposition were right in putting boldly their case against "rearmament without olicy." But rearmament is already under way, and the fact that the case against it had to be made under Hitler's shadow did not ease their task. Labour criticism of the Government's vacillations and hypocrisy about collective security, and of the Prime Minister's particular feebleness, is valid enough. But the industrial leaders, facing the *fait accompli*, are concerned to get assurances about the position of the Trade Unions and the maintenance of proper standards. This is evidently a matter which must be gone into with the greatest care; the Chancellor of the Exchequer showed a suspiciously hasty warmth in welcoming Mr. George Hicks's speech as an offer of co-operation on easy terms. Mr. Lloyd George made a brilliant contribution. He described the White Paper as irrelevent to the situation and asked for genuine defence including storage of food. Mr. Winston Churchill found the Government's programme all too modest, and exposed, as he has done before, the prodigious extent of Germany's rearmament. It is difficult, as he said, to see how she can continue this without going bankrupt, or stop it without creating immense unemployment and chaos. Such a state of affairs and the menace that it implies surely demand of this country not a determination to do likewise, but a firmer adherence to the principle of collective security and the most strenuous efforts for a general limitation of armaments. Mr. Churchill's exposure was, in fact, though he did not mean it to be so, an argument in favour of the Labour amendment.

A Ministry of Munitions?

The hint thrown out in the Commons debate on Tuesday that there may be a Minister of Munitions as well as a co-ordinator of the defence services may mean something or nothing. Clearly, if any real attempt is to be made to stop excess profiteering in the munition-making industries, a distinct department under a responsible head will be needed. Already the prices of armament shares have gone rocketing up in response to the White Paper; and the shareholders of Vickers and other big armament businesses are beginning to get their losses back—though in most cases the shares have probably changed hands, so that the gains accrue to speculative investors and not to those who made the losses earlier on. If there is a Minister of Munitions, it is to be hoped that he will be a person of real financial ability, armed with both the power and the will to stand up to the vested interests. It is common knowledge that in the Great War the permitted profits of the armament makers were not, despite the promises made to the Trade Unions, at so high a level that huge net gains accrued even after the Excess Profits Tax and the Special Munitions Levy had been paid. By 1918 the Ministry of Munitions had worked out an expert technique for checking and appraising costs; but the stable door was only locked long after the steed was stolen. A new Ministry should start from the accumulated experience of its predecessors, and with far less tenderness for the profit-makers than its predecessors were compelled to show.

Native Policy in Southern Rhodesia

Three Bills show how the Europeans of Southern Rhodesia (50,000 of them, including infants) are exercising their trust for a million Africans. Outside the neglected Reserves any native must now produce on demand evidence of his usefulness to his rulers—either a certificate

of employment, a permit to seek work (valid one week), or a visitor's " special " pass (as supplied by any European to his house-boy). This is the South African system which incidentally keeps the police busy regulating queues at the Pass Office, and making gaol-birds of the innocent, while the real rogues get away with unimpeachable forged " specials." Natives will protest fiercely at this reactionary measure, and Europeans will take further alarm. As if in anticipation, a second Bill seeks to control " fanatical and ostensibly religious movements " by the licensing of native preachers. Immediately this is aimed at the so-called Watch Tower Movement, which has long attracted more attention than the grievances on which it feeds; and " subversive propaganda " may be driven underground, for significantly, to win support from the new enthusiasts for " Native Custom," exponents of " traditional religion " are exempt. The third new measure, a Sedition Bill, borrows a notorious Union clause penalising word or action officially deemed " to engender or promote feelings of hostility " between Europeans and others. The Dominions Office, which has the last word, may perhaps be trusted to proceed against the Rhodesian Government itself for action calculated to have this effect not only in that Colony, but throughout the Empire.

The Tramway Strike

The tram strike in South West London was promptly ended on Tuesday when the London Passenger Transport Board put its foot down by announcing the immediate dismissal of any man who failed to return to work at once. The threat might not have been so effective, had it not been reinforced by the strikers' failure to secure the support of the men in neighbouring tramway depots and omnibus garages, as well as by the attitude of the Transport and General Workers' Union. The strike was unofficial, like other recent stoppages in the London area; and that means that it was called without exhausting the machinery of collective negotiations established under agreement between the Union and the L.P.T.B. The men's grievance—which concerned the methods of arranging reliefs—is too technical for its justification to be interpreted by the outsider. It may be a matter of substance, or it may not. But clearly, where regular machinery exists for the discussion of such questions, full use ought to be made of it before the strike weapon is invoked.

The State of Employment

Last month's unemployment figures were appreciably better than those of January, but still not nearly good enough. Less inclement weather enabled the building trades to make a much better showing; but coal mining and the distributive trades, as well as dock labour, showed actual setbacks, and in no industry except building was there any large advance. In January unemployment leapt up by 291,000; in February it fell by nearly 135,000. That leaves a lot of leeway still to be made up—presumably, in the view of the Government, by means mainly of increased expenditure upon armaments. Of course, there is still some seasonal improvement to be expected; and even now the level of employment is appreciably higher—by about 378,000—than it was a year ago. After allowing for the increased number of insured workers, this is equivalent to a fall in unemployment by rather more than a quarter of a million. But, for the time at least, the general improvement has undoubtedly received a check; and, apart from the immediate effects of the rearmament programme, the disturbed political conditions are not calculated to encourage a renewed advance. In these circumstances, there is increasing urgency in the demand of local authorities in the depressed areas to be relieved of the burden of contributing to the costs of unemployment, and in the pressure on the Government to increase the powers of the Commissioners for the Special Areas, instead of bleating that there will be no starving of them

Unemployment in the U.S.A.

In spite of the exceptionally hard winter, business recovery in the United States still seems to be making good progress. It is very difficult to estimate the amount of this in terms of the effect on unemployment. But it is probable, that the figure of 10,000,000 commonly current is a large exaggeration. For this includes 3,500,000 workers whose wages are paid out of Federal money, mainly through the Works Progress Administration. Excluding these, the maximum of unemployed persons is probably from six to six and a half millions, of whom some two or three millions are believed to be unemployables. Thus, the actual percentage of unemployment is not materially different from the corresponding figure for this country. The inclusion in the unemployed of all workers whose wages are paid out of Federal funds is extremely misleading, since a very large proportion of these are employed on public works which are not only necessary sooner or later, but can be regarded as of a normal character. Owing to the financial straits of many of the American municipalities, large sums are being spent on upkeep and improvement of public works which would normally be met out of municipal finances. The Works Progress Administration is now undertaking all kinds of small jobs of renovation and improvement which are ordinarily taken care of quietly and unnoticed by tens of thousands of municipalities and counties. It is clearly absurd to include in statistical unemployment the host of men occupied in this way.

London's Rates

London's rates are to go up this year—and as a matter of course many Londoners will blame this upon the Labour majority on the London County Council. It is true that the London Labour Party's policy has involved some extra expenditure on the relief of the unemployed, some on schools and some on housing—as well as a driblet on account of Parliament's refusal to help finance the new Waterloo Bridge. But the main cause is the fall in house-property values within the L.C.C. area. As London expands, most of the new building takes place outside the area controlled by the L.C.C. Yet the L.C.C. has to find the money for financing a host of services that are used by a population twice as large as that which it has any authority to tax. Most of the L.C.C.'s expenditure is inelastic; it does not fall as the population of Inner London is reduced. But rateable value is not inelastic, and has been seriously affected by the building boom in Outer London. Hence the necessity for higher rates to finance the essential services.

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IS THERE A WAY TO PEACE?

PROPERLY handled, Hitler's latest move may yet be used to reverse the wheels that are now running swiftly towards a world war. Wrongly handled it may destroy the last hope of peace.

What has Hitler done and why has he chosen this moment to do it? Hitler acts as the internal necessities of Fascism force him to act. To spend £1,500,000,000 on armaments in three years—Mr. Churchill's uncontradicted figure—is economically ruinous, and Dr. Schacht, who steers an adroit and perilous course through the rival demands of his Nazi colleagues, has recently informed them that it was impossible to proceed with rearmament without a 5 per cent. cut in all wages. A startling military move is a dictator's stock way of diverting attention from a reduction in the standard of living. A little sabre-rattling covers a lot of discontent. Further, as the always well-informed Berlin correspondent of the *Times* reports, M. Flandin was demanding from this country an automatic guarantee of the Rhineland as the price of supporting Great Britain in the oil embargo on Italy. Next week Great Britain might have been bound to go to all lengths with France. Therefore Hitler decided that this was the psychological moment for a move which had long been contemplated and prepared. He accompanied his repudiation of Locarno with a brilliantly conceived offer. Its object was to drive a wedge between the League Powers and to rally the forces of the Right throughout Europe on the cry that he is the leader of European civilisation against Russian Communism. He rightly calculated that English people would feel little indignation against a breach of legality, the substance of which, as we heard a bus conductor put it, is no more than to move his family into his own backyard. English people only allow themselves to get indignant when they feel that God and their interests are on the same side; in this issue they are not quite sure of either. We all have bad consciences about Germany's treatment since the war: England has talked of Germany's right to equality in Europe ever since she joined with France in depriving her of it. But Hitler's method is that of Frederick the Great and Bismarck—to take first and talk afterwards. The result is to put all peace-loving peoples into an intolerable dilemma. It sometimes wins momentary prestige. But in the long run the policy of the glittering sword and the shining armour does not bring success. It produces war, in which, as the Germans found on the last occasion, victory is dubious and general ruin the only certainty.

The French cannot take the complaisant British attitude towards the occupation of the Rhineland; nor would the man in the street in this country if he realised its significance. In itself, to move troops into the demilitarised zone seems merely to rectify an inequality; and if there was no more involved than another and final breach of Versailles, which would restore the self-respect of Germany, we should welcome it as a move towards peace.

But it is far more than this. It tears up not only the Treaty of Versailles, which is in fragments already and which was signed under compulsion, but the Treaty of Locarno, which, as Mr. Eden has reminded us, was a freely negotiated treaty only recently reaffirmed by Hitler himself. Hitler has indulged in no mere token occupation. He clearly intends fully to garrison the Rhineland and then to fortify it. His action increases the tension throughout the whole of Europe, because it again places Belgium at the mercy of Germany. As the Belgian Prime Minister pointed out in Paris on Tuesday, Belgium has not even provided Hitler with the flimsy pretext of a pact with Russia. Coupled with his menacing words to the Soviet Union, his action must be interpreted as the means of securing himself in the West so that his hands may be free in the East. It challenges the whole League system. If one treaty is torn up, why not another? If Hitler's own word about Locarno meant so little, why should his promised pacts with the small States round him mean any more? We have it in black and white in his own book, circulated in every town and village in Germany, that he intends to gather within the sphere of the Reich all German-speaking peoples in all the surrounding countries and to destroy France as soon as his strength is great enough. Why in these circumstances should France and Czechoslovakia, or any other of Germany's neighbours, feel confidence in his new promises of peace? His technique is familiar. He built up his power within Germany by violent actions, always coupled with assurances that he meant no further violence. Since he achieved power he has continued to rely on the unwillingness of civilised people to fight. We do not suggest that even these grave considerations justify a refusal to discuss Hitler's proposals. On the contrary it would be as mistaken to refuse to discuss them as it would be childish to take them at their face value or to imagine that his latest advance is meant to be final.

But it will be said that Hitler offers to re-enter the League and guarantees peace in the West of Europe for twenty-five years. A large section of the British press, with an innocence that does more credit to its heart than its head, welcomes this offer without realising that in the context of his speech as a whole it offers a most blatant contradiction. The gist of Hitler's speech was that he would not fight in the West, but he would give no guarantee about the East or the South. Even if he now includes Austria and Czechoslovakia among the small States with whom he is willing to make pacts of non-aggression, he still reserves to himself the right to make war against the U.S.S.R. Indeed the main import of his pronouncement was that Russia was the inevitable enemy against whom he would fight when he had safeguarded the Rhine frontier by buying off the League Powers in the West. His promise to enter the League on these terms is meaningless unless he has in mind to "revise" the Covenant out of existence or try to drive the Soviet Union out to make way for his own entrance. If Hitler now enters the League, Mr. Litvinov will be his colleague. Both of them will be permanent members of the League Council. Entrance into the League implies a universal obligation not to resort to war, and a pledge to co-operate as a good neighbour, with Russia as with every other League State. Therefore our first condition for Germany's entrance into the League should be a repudiation of the whole tone and spirit of the speech in which he included his offer of return. Moreover, membership of the League has always implied a kind of minimum subscription. A member State must be willing to abide by international treaties; it must treat its racial minorities with justice and be pre-

pared loyally to accept the obligations of membership. Hitler will be entering a comparatively civilised community. Moreover, there is no point in Hitler's return to the League unless Germany as well as all the rest of us are prepared to co-operate in the task of disarming Europe and bringing the menace of the air under international control. Germany's withdrawal from the League and her prodigious rearmament have pushed the rest of the world into rearmament too. Hitler may fairly retort that it was the failure of the other Powers to implement their promises about disarmament that led her to withdraw from the League. In this matter we are all to blame; and if Germany returns to Geneva, a new opportunity arises for retracing our steps and stopping the otherwise inevitable armament race. One of the principal objects of the League was to render disarmament possible. A system of collective security in which all the Powers are arming against one another is manifest nonsense. If Germany and the other Powers will also agree to a limitation of armaments a new start may be made at Geneva.

If Hitler were plainly asked whether he is prepared to accept the conditions inherent in membership of the League—they imply a considerable change in Nazi philosophy—and to abandon his expansionist aims in the East as well as the West, we might discover from discussion whether his offer is sincere. Britain and France for their part must state in the clearest terms their willingness to consider at Geneva any remaining German grievances. The Covenant provides machinery for the adaptation of treaties to the needs of a changing world; and hints have been thrown out by Sir Samuel Hoare and other members of the present British Government that they would not be totally impervious to proposals to share such economic benefits as a colonial empire is supposed to confer.

The attitude of all parties to the dispute might be modified if Great Britain put forward proposals of this kind. What is the alternative? Great Britain will not regard the occupation of the Rhineland as a *casus belli*, nor are economic sanctions a practical policy against Germany. Therefore, to insist on a complete climb-down on Germany's part as a preliminary to any discussions must lead to a deadlock. Germany will remain in possession in the Rhineland: the belt of terrified and hostile Powers will tighten and the next German plunge will probably mean war. It is urgent therefore for Great Britain and France to discuss a possible new basis for peace in Europe. French reluctance to discuss Germany's return to the League on Hitler's own terms seems to us natural and justifiable. They fear pro-German tendencies in the British Cabinet; they prefer to block negotiations altogether rather than to risk discussion which might result in a transformation of the League on lines such as Hitler would desire. If Hitler is permitted to return to Geneva on his own terms, and not on ours, the result will be general rearmament, a League dominated by Mussolini with the spoils of Italy in his hands and Hitler with a waste-paper basket full of torn-up treaties. Such a League would forfeit all confidence. It would quickly dissolve into warring fragments whose only bond of unity would be the desire of the forces of reaction to support Germany in a war on Russia. It is childish to think that such a war would be confined to the East, and that we or France would be able to remain aloof. Because the French see this situation clearly, and we do not, there is still serious danger that Hitler will succeed in dividing Great Britain from the other League Powers. The best hope of avoiding a complete deadlock and keeping together the democratic and Socialist States which still want peace is for Britain to make the most complete pledge of solidarity with France and the League in any case and to advance new proposals which would let Hitler into the League, if he will come, on League terms and not on his own.

THE L.C.C. AND THE SLUMS

AT the L.C.C. Election of March, 1934, the London Labour Party used with effect the slogan, "Up with the Houses—Down with the Slums!" There was great public concern about London housing conditions, and Labour's success was due in large part to the desire of many electors to see London delivered from the reproach of its slum areas.

At that election Labour gained a majority on the London County Council for three years, of which two have already gone by. In March, 1937—just a year ahead—the next L.C.C. election will take place; and it seems a good moment to inquire whether the drive against the slums, which London expected from a Labour Council, is in fact making progress.

Three years are all too short a time for the full effects of a changed slum clearance policy to become apparent. The clearing of a slum and the building of new dwellings are the culmination of a particularly long and cumbrous legal procedure, and quick results are, under present conditions, simply impossible to command.

When the Council's officers have their attention directed to a particular area, they must make careful investigations before representing it to the appropriate Committee as ripe for clearance. The Committees concerned must then consider the scheme and recommend it to the Council; after which the necessary Order or Orders must be drafted. This operation involves the compiling of a book of references of all the owners and of population statistics—taking less or more time according to the willingness or otherwise of owners and others to give information. Five or six months may easily be taken up in reaching this point—the end of the preliminary stage. Then another six months go by in advertising the Order, in preliminary consideration by the Minister, in the holding of a public inquiry into objections, and in preparing and submitting revised estimates to the Committee. Up to this point the best part of a year has elapsed.

The next stage involves the service of notices to treat and the attempt to negotiate agreement with the owners or, failing agreement, recourse to arbitration before purchase can be completed. When possession of part of the area is eventually secured, the tenants must be moved elsewhere before clearance operations can be started and the first block of dwellings begun. Twenty months have now been eaten up since the first steps for representation of the area were taken, and another eight months usually go by before the first dwellings are ready on the cleared portion of the site.

It will therefore be seen that if the newly elected Council had taken preliminary steps for the clearance of an area on the first possible day after the election, it might well be that the results, shown in new dwellings, would not be in evidence until over two years afterwards; while the full effects of its total housing effort during the three years of its life will not be felt until well on into the life-time of its successor.

It was presumably knowledge of these facts that caused the London Labour Party, at the 1934 election, to be much more cautious with its promises than political parties have the reputation for being. One of its pamphlets, *A Housing Policy for London* (1934), issued just before the election, stated that:

> While, in its first three years of power, Labour can do much to prepare for and initiate a large-scale attack on this problem, it must receive the confidence of the electors, not at one election only, but also at succeeding elections, if London's housing and slum problems are to be satisfactorily dealt with.

Nor is this all. Other circumstances, productive of delay in housing operations, have arisen during the lifetime of the present Council. On coming into power at County Hall, it found the existing housing organisation was quite inadequate for the huge task of dealing with London's slums in reasonable time—and, indeed, inadequate for carrying out even the lesser housing programme adopted by the previous Council. The 1931 financial crisis had brought a reduction of the staff of the Architect's department; other departments concerned with housing were equally unfitted to deal with a large-scale housing and slum-clearance effort. Valuable months had to be taken up with reorganising the Council's departments, with setting up an effective housing section in the Architect's department, with doubling the staff of medical officers concerned with the work of representing slum areas, and with generally re-equipping and reshaping the housing machine.

Further, the Bill which became the Housing Act, 1935, caused additional obstacles to slum clearance progress. It altered the basis of compensation for owners of property involved in clearance schemes. The effect was that while the Bill was before Parliament, many owners refused to negotiate with the Council and delayed settling compensation terms in the hope—justified by events—that they would get more money when the Bill became law.

Resistance and obstruction from other interests have also met the Council's efforts to acquire sites for housing. Chingford Urban District Council, for example, had "zoned" certain land in its area for building, but hurriedly decided to preserve it for open space after hearing of the intention of the L.C.C. to acquire the site for housing purposes. At the present moment opposition is being organised to a proposal to acquire a large site in Stoke Newington, while the Council continuously encounters quiet obstruction and delaying tactics by owners of property in clearance areas.

It will be seen, then, that Labour was both honest and wise in not promising an instantaneous solution of the slum problems of London; and it is necessary to stress the legal and other difficulties which housing reformers are heirs to, in order to form a just estimate of the merits of the Labour L.C.C.'s housing achievement. The question is not whether the Council has performed a miracle by solving London's housing and slum clearance problems; but whether it has done all that was humanly possible—that is to say, has "prepared for and initiated a large-scale attack on the problem."

During the first year of the present Council's existence, ending on March 31st, 1935, the total number of L.C.C. dwellings provided was 3,535. Building contracts are, of course, entered into for many months in advance, and much of that total was provided under contracts made by the previous Council. Even so, the degree of speeding-up that it was possible to apply made the year's total some 500 dwellings more than the total of the previous twelve months; it is noteworthy, as evidence of the Council's new concentration on slum clearance rehousing, that the 1,670 block dwelling tenements provided (part of the above total of 3,535 dwellings) was the largest number built in any one year so far.

For the next year, 1935–36, the Council had hoped to provide 5,000 block dwellings and 2,500 cottages; owing to delays caused by the introduction of the 1935 Act and to the unusually bad weather during the past few months, this programme will probably take two or three months longer to carry out. At the moment, some 6,500 houses and flats are in course of construction. In the third year, the original intention was to build 10,000 block dwellings and 2,500 cottages; a substantial approach to those figures will be made, although difficulties and delays in acquiring sufficient sites will postpone the completion of the full programme until after the end of the third financial year.

At all events, while for the reasons stated the announced programmes of the Council cannot be fully carried out in the period originally intended, the actual achievement—particularly in slum clearance—for the second and third years of its term of office is likely to be much more substantial than that of its predecessors. In future years, the number of dwellings provided, both on cottage estates and for slum clearance rehousing, will show a large increase as a result of the work which is at present being carried out.

From figures already quoted, it will be seen that the Council is concentrating mainly on slum clearance, although not ignoring the need for "new" houses, as distinct from dwellings provided in substitution for those demolished. There is no doubt about the speeding-up of slum clearance. The previous Municipal Reform Council, in its three years of power, declared thirty-one clearance areas; the present Council, in less than two years, has already declared eighty-five. With the addition of schemes upon which preliminary work is proceeding, no fewer than 150 areas are already being dealt with, or are under consideration.

In the securing of sites for housing purposes, the Council can show considerable results, in spite of obstruction in certain quarters. Since March, 1934, decisions have been taken to acquire important sites, both for slum clearance rehousing and for cottage estates, covering a total of nearly 1,700 acres. The most outstanding of these are at Harrow, Kenton, Charlton, Chingford, Chigwell, Hackney, Hanwell, Lewisham, Morden, Wandsworth, the White City, Edmonton and Stoke Newington.

Another housing matter may be mentioned here. At one of its earlier meetings, the present Council reviewed the rents charged for its dwellings, and made reductions, mainly in the rents paid by former slum dwellers, ranging from 6*d*. to 4*s*. 6*d*. per week—a concession which costs between £40,000 and £60,000 a year. The Council has also established a more complete understanding in matters of slum clearance with the Metropolitan Borough Councils than has existed previously.

In view of all these facts, it may fairly be claimed that what has been done is much more than "preparation for and initiation of a large-scale attack on London's housing and slum clearance problems"; and the Labour Party will ask the electors in March, 1937, to continue for a further period its tenure of power at County Hall, so that the results of all this housing activity—which must of necessity come to fruition after a considerable time-lag—may be consolidated, and the pace maintained.

The Municipal Reform opposition, on the other hand, will suggest to London that the financial burden involved by all this housing and slum clearance activity is too great to be borne—or, in other words, that the present Council is doing too much. The choice is a plain one. If London really wants its slums to go it must be prepared to pay, for under present conditions slum clearance is a costly business. If it cares more for its pockets than for decent houses for the people, it may return Municipal Reform to power. In that case the rates will probably go down; but many of the slums that have been condemned by the present Council will stay up.

A LONDON DIARY

THERE is no war situation at the moment in Europe. There will be no war, because France does not mean to march, Britain is even more resolutely against warlike action and Germany is not ready. Diplomacy is always more than half bluff. All parties to the dispute are angling for position—not for an immediate war, but for one which they expect before long. Italy sees in Germany's move an opportunity to get rid of sanctions; she cannot very easily be a Locarno Power discussing possible sanctions against Germany and at the same time having sanctions carried out against her. Hitler wants to divide Great Britain from France and Russia, and British friendship, as Hitler learnt from Bismarck's success and the Kaiser's failure, is essential to German expansion. Great Britain, pro-German if not anti-French, went to Paris undecided whether to be a European Power or not and cast herself for the role of the honest broker, sitting tight meanwhile on the spoils of past aggressions without at present making any constructive suggestions for loosening the hold on

overseas materials and markets, which is one of the prime grievances of the "Have-Not" Powers. This is the most dangerous position of all: unless we are wholly in the League system, we should be far safer if we adopted Mr. Lansbury's advice, chucked the Empire and unilaterally disarmed. We might even be as safe as Denmark, which is certainly safer than the heavily armed Powers.

* * *

France, I understand, hardly hoped for British support in sanctions; by demanding them if Hitler does not withdraw she would rule out of discussion negotiations which, in view of Mr. Baldwin's tragically weak and vacillating attitude, she regards as dangerous to the whole system of collective security and likely to lead to a reconstruction of the League on the Fascist model—which means a free hand for aggressors. The risk in this policy was that British sympathy might be alienated and England driven into a position of benevolent neutrality to Germany. The British Cabinet was divided: Mr. Eden stood for the League as far as he could. But he seemed at the outset to be in a minority and I can understand why, if he had to discuss every move with Mr. Baldwin by 'phone, he should prefer discussions to take place in London rather than Paris or Geneva. It is significant that Lord Halifax, who is reported to be particularly friendly to the German side, should have been appointed as Mr. Eden's colleague.

* * *

The folly of not co-ordinating housing and industrial development was brought home to me by the example of a family which has recently moved under a slum clearance scheme from Holborn to Dagenham. Both husband and wife still retain jobs in London. The husband pays 7*s.* 6*d.* a week in railway fares out of a wage of 36*s.* The wife pays 6*s.* in fares and on three days a week is forced to leave home at 6.30 in the morning and does not get back until 9.45 at night. The daughter pays 3*s.* 6*d.* in fares and earns a wage of 15*s.* Thus, transport charges impose a weekly charge of 17*s.* on the family income. I imagine this kind of complaint must be fairly general, since between 1921 and 1931 more than 100,000 persons were pushed out of London or into overcrowded central houses, owing to the displacement of dwelling houses by factories and offices. In the sacred name of supply and demand, therefore, the employer obtains a central site at the expense of his workpeople's wages. A scheme of planning which does not combine slum clearance with factory clearance, or at least with control over the institution of new factories, is likely to be deprived of much of its usefulness. We need new towns not new suburbs.

* * *

Where ought new factories and workshops to be placed? For years thoughtful people have pointed out the folly of allowing industries to crop up anywhere that suits the employer without worrying about the claims of the distressed areas or about the need for co-ordinating industrial development with housing schemes. Now with rearmament the deliberate revival of the depressed areas which we were always told was economically out of the question for peaceful purposes is accepted as natural and essential. Indeed, we are told that rearmament is to make us all prosperous. I recall the brilliant article by Mr. Emil Davies published in this journal in March, 1931, in which he drew a fancy picture of the Pretended War. The nations, he suggested, had only to pretend that a big war with some mythical external Power was probable in the next few years and we should drop our animosities, leave off saying that the depression was due to inevitable economic causes and race to prosperity on a wave of war preparation. Well, that is just what is happening now, except that the war that is coming at the end of the rearmament is not a pretence. Why is it possible to use our resources and organise our life only for mutual destruction?

* * *

I have just been reading a remarkable pamphlet called *Merseyside: the Relief of the Poor* (Liverpool University Press, 1*s.*), by Dr. Caradog Jones, the director of the "Social Survey of Merseyside." Its facts and figures are taken from Liverpool and the neighbouring areas, but most of them have a far wider application, and they are worth close study by everyone interested in problems of poverty. One point that struck me particularly is the hard case of the unemployed who, when drawing unemployment insurance benefit or assistance, fall sick and have to "go on the panel." In such a case a man ceases to be entitled to his insurance benefit of 17*s.*, since he is not "capable of and available for work"; he gets instead 15*s.* sickness benefit, with no allowances for dependants. (The client of the Unemployment Assistance Board is, rather ironically, in a slightly better position, since the Board will give limited allowances in addition to sickness benefit, but only for nineteen days at most.) Thus, an insured worker with a wife and two young children suddenly finds himself on a sick-bed and, when he needs more rather than less money, has his income reduced from 32*s.* to 15*s.* a week. And, as Dr. Caradog Jones says, "the continuous strain of looking for work and failing to find it not infrequently tells upon a man's health." How many thousands, in these circumstances, are driven to supplement their miserable sick pay by resort to the Poor Law—the Poor Law from which the Unemployment Insurance and Unemployment Assistance schemes were designed to save them?

* * *

My impression after a good deal of inquiry into the ways of moneylenders and firms which sell on the instalment system is that out of thousands of poor debtors who get into difficulties the luckier ones are those who are sued by their creditors. The County Court is usually more merciful than the debt collector whose own job depends on results, and a friend of mine who has much experience of this type of case tells me that he has known many people reduce themselves to a "bread-and-margarine standard" of semi-starvation in order to pay sixpences and shillings to firms whose claims would never have been upheld by the Court. Poor people are often terrified of the law; and a judge has to be quick to spot attempts of petty credit firms to mislead the Courts about their debtors' means. My friend, who attended a London Registrar's Court a few weeks ago, heard the Registrar comment on three occasions during one hour on the fact that the creditors had given incorrect information about the debtors' occupation. One of those defendants described on the summons as "of independent means" proved to be a woman who supplemented her husband's small wages by taking in a little sewing! I noticed with pleasure the comments of the judge on a case that came before the Shoreditch County Court recently. A man, described as a french polisher, whose wife said he had been out of work for two years, had a judgment against him for £7 17*s.* 5*d.* and was still £5 3*s.* in default. I quote the rest from the *Hackney Gazette*, of February 3rd.

> His wife offered 2*s.* per month. Asked by Judge Lilly what means her husband had to pay with she replied that he was receiving 14*s.* 6*d.* from the Public Assistance Committee.
>
> The Judge: "Certainly not! I am not going to make an order for judgment out of that. You had better be careful about the people you bring here. Apparently no attempt was made to investigate this case before bringing. I shall make no order on this summons. You will have to issue a new summons and it is unwise to do this while the man is out of work."

* * *

Perhaps the undergraduates at Pembroke who organised the strike to protest against the quality of the food provided in their Hall scarcely realised how dearly their cause would have appealed to the most famous member of their College. For the subject of food provided Dr. Johnson with a perpetual topic of conversation. "Some people," he said, "have a foolish way of not minding, or of pretending not to mind, what they eat. For my part, I mind my belly very studiously and very carefully; for I look upon it that he who does not mind his belly will hardly mind anything else." The authorities will scarcely be able to prevail against this new movement, which

combines the modern weapon of the strike with the authentic voice of College tradition.

* * *

The bright comment of the Oxford Labour Club's Bulletin on the accession of the present King—"Magdalene Man Makes Good"—reminds me of an incident which is not, I think, much known outside Cambridge. When Edward VII was King and Balfour Prime Minister, Butler, the famous Master of Trinity made a somewhat pompous speech at a Trinity dinner congratulating the College on the fact that England "had a Trinity Prime Minister and, might he add, a Trinity King." The seconder of the toast, who did not love Butler, replied with a description of the Day of Judgment when God had divided the sheep from the goats. After this final ceremony the Master of Trinity, he said, would say a few words, congratulating the Almighty on the fact that He too was a Trinity man. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mr. Gordon Webster.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

All of us will be eligible for the next war (if it comes) and there is so much handwriting on the wall I'm not in the least surprised that young men are rushing to join the R.A.F., which will be quite the *cleanest* service to belong to.—*Men Only.*

A "Peace Badge" should be awarded to every woman who obtains a recruit, and a special badge for ten recruits or more.—Letter in *Daily Mail.*

Delivering the Lenten address yesterday at St. Ann's Church, Manchester, the Ven. A. Selwyn Bean, Archdeacon of Manchester, whose subject was "Christ and the Empire," said that if one studied the British Empire one clearly seemed to see in it the hand of God and the forging of an instrument for the carrying out of His will . . . we had never risen to the full realisation of what was God's purpose in bringing the Empire into existence. He believed God had brought it into being that it might be responsible for the evangelisation of the world.—*Manchester Guardian.*

When the organisers of a proposed comic match to aid the Mayor of Ramsgate's Distress Fund, wrote to the Kent F.A. asking permission to use the Dumpton ground, they received the following reply: "The F.A. and ourselves look with grave disfavour on so-called comic football matches. In our view the game should not be burlesqued, even in the cause of charity."—*Daily Mirror.*

He was carrying his cup away when his wife abused him, knocked the tea out of his hands, poured pepper on the bread and butter and hit him on the nose. He went upstairs and prayed about it.—*Evening Standard.*

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has asked the Emperor of Abyssinia to accept the Silver Medal for Meritorious Services. This is the Society's highest award. It is to be in recognition of the Emperor's having presented land on which an animals' hospital has been built, and for his support of the Animal Protection Society in Abyssinia. His daughter is Vice-President of that society. In 1933 Signor Mussolini was awarded this medal for declaring the island of Capri a bird sanctuary.—*Daily Telegraph.*

I have seen it stated by pilots of the air that even if starting off with a cold, after travelling some distance and high up they see no more of their cold. If this be so, why not bring the air down to us, which I suggest can be done by captive balloon, the guide rope being hollow, on the thermo principle, and the air sucked down?—Letter in *Observer.*

Grosvenor House (Park Lane)—Directors have decided, in view of the death of the King, not to distribute an int. divd. on Ord. shs. They state that business of company has been, and is continuing to be, satisfactory.—*Financial Times.*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I HAVE often been filled with amazement at the enormous amount of intellectual and manual activity that is devoted year by year to the composition of letters to the editor. The letter to the editor is, I believe, a comparatively new literary form; yet it is a form that is already far more widely cultivated than the poem or the story. Men who despise poets as highbrows feel their fingers itching to write letters to the editor.

Most of them, I suppose, regard themselves as hard-headed, practical men, but in point of fact they are among the most disinterested and unpractical of literary artists. Nearly every other literary artist expects to be paid for his work. Mr. Shaw will not allow his plays to be produced for nothing. Mr. Wells is magnificently disinterested in his passion for human progress, but he did not brush aside the royalties that were due to him from his *Outline of History*. Yet, when it comes to writing letters to the editor, Mr. Shaw and Mr. Wells become as dreamy and unpractical as poets are commonly supposed to be. In order to get into the correspondence column Mr. Shaw is ready to write a thousand words about the Danakils for nothing; and Mr. Wells has more than once provided a paper with its liveliest contribution gratis on the sole condition that he was allowed to begin it with the word "Sir." It is the same with many other eminent modern writers; and painters, sculptors, architects, and musicians are equally indifferent to money when under the influence of this form of *cacoethes scribendi*.

When our century comes to be judged by the historians, and the post-Marxians denounce us as a generation of greedy individualists who worked only for profit, I hope all the mass of unpaid service involved in the writing of letters to the editor will be remembered in our favour. Think of the lifelong industry of Mr. Algernon Ashton and the Rev. J. P. Bacon-Phillips. Milton, it is said, made only £5 out of *Paradise Lost*. Did Mr. Ashton make even five shillings, or expect to make it, out of all the thousands of letters he has written to the newspapers? Here, at least, is one bright spot in our bourgeois civilisation—a foretaste of William Morris's money-contemptuous Utopia.

It is true that many letters to the editor are written, not from a purely artistic necessity, but partly in order to air a grievance. Thus, when we find a letter beginning: "I very much regret to note your slighting reference to sanitary inspectors," we take it for granted that the writer has been annoyed by a slur on the dignity of his profession, and is anxious to right himself in the eyes of the world. On the other hand, when the writer is a man who has seen a quotation that he liked on a tear-off calendar, and has sat down to communicate his discovery to an editor, adding: "It is by George Herbert. Can you tell me more about him?" we realise that his letter was the result of a purely artistic impulse with no selfish alloy. It is obviously a fairly easy thing in any part of England to find out something about George Herbert without writing to an editor. There are cheap books and free libraries, and the local curate or Methodist minister could be consulted. The born letter-writer will have none of these easy aids to instruction, however. He wants an excuse for writing a letter and exercising his genius, and loves his question even more than he longs for the answer.

So, at least, I interpret him as I read his letters. For what other purpose except that of self-expression could a lady write a letter to the editor asking for suggestions for a name for her Guernsey bungalow which is "low-lying, flat-roofed, the result of hard work and hopes"? Surely there is no one on earth so lacking in ingenuity or, at least, in moderately ingenious friends, as to be unable to discover a suitable name for a bungalow without writing to a great newspaper. Most of us could propose a hundred names without a moment's thought —"Chatsworth," "Blenheim," "Nirvana," "Journey's End," "Iodine," "Chlorine"—anything you please. I doubt, however, whether the letter-writer wants to know these names

"In England's green and pleasant land"

Drawn by ARTHUR WRAGG

[Eastwood Park, 14 miles from Bristol, has been acquired by the State for poison gas experiments.]

so much as she wants to write. It is the same in conversation. Many people ask questions not because they want to know the answers, but because they want to talk; some of them do not listen to the answers. Similarly, I believe that the correspondents who wrote letters in reply to the Guernsey lady had no genuine desire to help her, but were moved solely by a desire to make use of their talent for letter-writing. Imagine the creative ecstasy of the correspondent who wrote: "May I suggest—'Excelsior'?" Think of the Rabelaisian joy of the lady who wrote to suggest "Dam-fino," or of the lyrical rapture of the other lady who proposed "Tranquilla" with its suggestion of peace. It is true that some of these names may be more suitable to such a dwelling as the low-lying, flat-roofed Guernsey bungalow than "Chatsworth." My point is, however, that anybody except a predestined letter-writer can find a name for a bungalow as easily as he can find a name for a cat. Edmund Gosse did not write to the papers asking what he should call his black-and-white cat. He called it "Buchanan."

Many of the letters to editors, however, it must be admitted, are tainted by a genuine desire for information. Thus we find a Catford correspondent writing: "To my intense surprise it has been pointed out to me that the average person's top teeth slightly overlap the lower teeth when the mouth is closed. In my own case top and bottom teeth are level all round—in fact, at one point the top teeth fall slightly inside the bottom. Is this unique?" It is easy to imagine the half-alarm, half-pride with which the correspondent realised for the first time that he was not as other men. It is always pleasant to discover that one resembles Julius Caesar or Napoleon or some other freak of genius if it is only in the oddity of one's ears. Might not the original contour of his teeth mark a man out for great things? There may be boastfulness indeed as well as desire for information in such a letter as this. That is nothing against the letter as a work of art, however. Many great writers have been boastful. See the Sonnets of Shakespeare.

Boastfulness, again, is the characteristic of the married woman's letter in which she speaks scornfully of cookery as a magnet for masculine love. "Before I married," she writes, "I couldn't cook water. My assets were paint, varnish, a cultivated flair for expensive-looking clothes made cheaply, and a gay and pleasing manner. Result: six suitors. Domesticity is woman's birthright and is soon mastered. The average man is romantic . . . and dishes are not glamorous." That letter is surely a piece of triumphant self-expression—the work of a true artist. With those six suitors, there is enough plot in it to fill an eight-and-sixpenny novel. Many sad husbands might dispute the truth of the last phrase: "Dishes are not glamorous"; but, at least, they could not deny that it is a perfect statement of a by no means uncommon woman's point of view. As the world progresses, "Dishes Are Not Glamorous" is a motto that is likely to be hung up more and more generally in English houses in place of the old-fashioned "God Bless Our Home." One result will be a revival of club life.

What strikes me as odd about all these wonderful letters to the editor is not only that the writers write them for nothing, but that most of them are things that the editor would not think worth printing if they were sent in as articles or paragraphs. And most of us who read them eagerly as letters would pass nine out of ten of them unread if they appeared anywhere except in the correspondence column. Dishes may not be glamorous, but letters to the editor are. Why do they exercise this enticement on us? They stir our curiosity like the questions at the end of a public meeting. It may be that we feel that here the members of the great public take their fling and give us a holiday from formality. Whatever the reason, we read the stuff. Most of us, in our more inspired moments, even write it. I myself compose several letters to the editor weekly—in my head—and, if it were not for the manual labour involved, I should write them. "Sir," I should begin. . . . I, too, in my dreams have a soul above money, the soul of an artist.

Y. Y.

NEWS-HUNTING IN ETHIOPIA

THE wise man who sent his son to an international conference in order that he might see how the affairs of the world are mismanaged might well have sent him to Addis Ababa to see how the world gets its news. Abyssinia loomed up as a possible centre of interest a little over a year ago. It was a case when the early bird got any worms that were about. The few newspapers and agencies, which sent men out some months before hostilities began, have reaped their reward. Their representatives came to terms with the slow-moving Ethiopian officials, picked up connections in the queer world of foreigners who are not on their Legation's calling list, and they were also able to travel about the country to a limited extent. The clever and enterprising young man who represents the *Times* made a tour of the prospective fronts, visiting places which would now be completely unreachable, though still in Abyssinian hands. One or two individuals captured a transient market with hastily compiled books. The most successful was Ladislas Farago, though I must confess that a slight acquaintance with the country and the people whom he met has not increased my respect for his amusing book *Abyssinia on the Eve*. The weakness about many of the correspondents, who were sent out hastily from Europe, was that they had no Eastern or African background to their minds, and they described as peculiar to Abyssinia the kind of phenomena familiar to all who frequent the world which lies between Casablanca and Allahabad.

The rush of correspondents began when fighting had actually started—there was, of course, no formal declaration of war. All over Europe and America editors decided that here was a great opportunity for applying modern technical methods to a nice little war, which they probably thought would be both picturesque and short. Special correspondents, film men, broadcasting experts, out they came to Jibuti, which was already chock-a-block with Italian spies and old Italian residents of Ethiopia, who were hoping to return soon in triumph. Then more slowly the cavalcade moved up to Addis Ababa, for the Emperor was a little shy about this second invasion, and the railway had to cope with a mass of lorries, tents, and equipment just as they were also getting busy with munitions. Still they all got up the hill, with America in the van. The "world's highest paid journalist," Mr. Knickerbocker, deigned to give his golden opinion on the "little scrap," and behind him was a solid phalanx whose names would soon be adorning the headlines in their home town. "Blank says Ras Seyum the lad to give Mussolini bad nights," and if it is objected that this is too long for a headline, I can only say that truth is stranger than fiction—Blank's masterpiece returned to him after many days, and finally adorned a place which convention forbids me from mentioning.

About a hundred and twenty properly accredited correspondents came out in the autumn, and with them were a number of men specialising in "pictures," and a nondescript group who described themselves as "journalists" for much the same reason that impels naughty ladies, when they appear in the police courts, to call themselves "actresses." The last section contained several Italian agents, polyglot cut-throats drawn mostly from eastern Europe and vaguely connected with some minor newspaper. Most of them have been expelled during the last few months, together with some of their "opposite numbers" amongst the five thousand odd "Europeans" who were living in Addis Ababa before the war. When they reach Jibuti it is part of their procedure to give lurid interviews about the horrors of a correspondent's life in Ethiopia, the mendacity of the Government, and the large number of Englishmen nefariously assisting the enemies of civilisation.

Why these espionage agents are ever caught remains a mystery. It must be the easiest country in the world for a spy, though there is probably little information of value which can be given. Everybody knows everybody's business, or thinks he does. All material coming into the country can be easily

checked at one or two points. As to the offices, they are like that distinguished gentleman at Simla, of whom it used to be said " his roof lets everything in, and he lets everything out." The espionage work seems to have been curiously inefficient, or perhaps Mussolini is not interested in the truth. I came across one interesting example of how news is manufactured. Various tenders for ammunition were drifting about a certain office, and copies found their way outside. Most of the orders for cartridges have actually gone to the smaller countries, like Switzerland and Belgium, and the English firm had quoted unsuccessfully for so many cartridges *in clips* — the usual clips of five only too painfully familiar to many of us. This was transmitted and appeared in the Italian press as an accepted order for " clipped " cartridges, which was translated as if they were fitted with " dum-dum " bullets.

But to return to the genuine correspondents. They soon discovered that though Addis Ababa looks nice and central on a large scale map, it is about three hundred miles of almost incredibly difficult country from any place where fighting has occurred or is likely to occur, at any rate before next autumn. No map can give much impression of Abyssinia's extraordinary conformation. Towards the North the land is like a shallow bowl rising out of the plain. The edge of the bowl is the watershed, but on the inner western side Nature has cut the most marvellous gorges, most of which carry water into the Blue Nile, which itself runs in the largest of all. Hence one may look northwards across what seems passable country, without realising that there are canyons cut in it, with sometimes a two thousand foot sheer drop on either side. Slowly were these facts borne in upon the newspaper cavalcade. Many decided to stop in Addis Ababa, the more adventurous and the better equipped moved slowly along the outside (the eastern side) of the bowl towards Dessie, which is the nearest approach to a headquarters that the Northern army possesses, but is still 150 miles from the most advanced Italian troops.

In the meanwhile the Government was fully alive to the dangers of " white men," totally ignorant of the country and its language, wandering about amongst a warlike people roused to a considerable degree of xenophobia by the Italian attack and still more by the bombing of villages. The cavalcade was slowed down, checked, and shepherded, until it was really only the advance guard which parked its lorries at Dessie, where it had the excitement of an occasional bombing, and could be kept well under the Emperor's eye. Miles away the war was proceeding along unexpected lines. Where the Italians chose to press forward, with the whole advantage afforded by weight of metal and unlimited ammunition, they found comparatively little opposition, but each advance over this difficult country increased their troubles, while the Ethiopians, only occasionally lapsing from the tactics which suit them best, formed an ever present but elusive threat to their flanks. The tribal levies were proving themselves some of the finest fighting stock in the world, using the country and sniping like Pathans, and ready at any moment to rush in for hand-to-hand fighting with all the dash of the " Fuzzy-wuzzies, who broke the British square," and to whom of course many Ethiopians are racially akin. If only it had been more orderly, more according to plan, it would have been great stuff for the correspondents, and still greater for the cinema-men, but they never had a chance of being within miles of it. Imagine a " picture " of the bottling up and capturing of the twenty Italian " whippets " !

Gradually the vision has faded. There will be no broadcasts from the field of battle, for there is no field of battle. There is reputed to be one man, a Russian travelling light according to Mr. Peter Fleming's method, who is getting some wonderful photographs, but for the most part correspondents and " picture-men " have folded up their tents and are fading silently away. Dessie is almost deserted, and the Southern front, which looks more hopeful on the map, is mostly scrub jungle and impossible. Of the hundred and twenty correspondents, less than twenty remain, and that number is dwindling. The American papers, which are reputed to have spent half a million pounds on the venture, have written it off as a loss. Most of the nondescripts have also been shepherded down the hill. Some of them, like the " Colonel " who wore the cavalry uniform of a Balkan State, have left behind them a fragrant memory and a number of " dud " cheques. Addis Ababa, its glory a little faded, is left as a town of rumours and scraps of semi-official news. We are kept in touch with Europe through a wireless communiqué, which is like a nightmare vision of a world rapidly dissolving into chaos, while the war news emanates in little type-written slips from the Press Bureau.

There is considerable dispute about the value of these latter reports, which in the long run form the basis of most of the " news " that is served up from the Ethiopian side, just as the corresponding Italian statements are the basis of the Eritrean and Somaliland " news." Some of the reports are simply competitive, part of a game which the Italians usually begin. It is seen at its best in Jibuti, where an Italian report of ten thousand Ethiopian casualties, posted on the Consulate, provokes a reply within half an hour in which the Ethiopians claim to have themselves *buried* fifteen thousand " white black-shirts." But allowing for these little vagaries, and disregarding most of the " exact " figures which are given, the reports seem to provide a fairly consistent picture of the fighting which occurs. This is the opinion of a very knowledgeable correspondent, working for one of the news agencies, who has as good opportunities as anyone for checking the statements. The Ethiopian reports are usually later than the Italian. Most of the fighting has been done by the tribal levies, and their accounts have to be transmitted to a general, and then sent on, probably by runner, to the end of one of the very few wires which lead ultimately to Dessie, and thence to Addis Ababa. This must then be served up for the European and American public, garnished with a little " first-hand information " or a few of the rumours which float faster and faster round the diminishing circle of correspondents.

G. T. GARRATT

Addis Ababa, Feb., 1936.

Correspondence

GERMANY'S OFFER

SIR,—About a month ago the Hon. Harold Nicolson, M.P., in the course of an address to a Peace Society in the University of Cambridge, referred to the extraordinary wave of public feeling which swept up to Westminster at the time of the Hoare-Laval scheme. For once, he said, the British public knew its own mind, and the Government—always pathetically anxious to do the nation's bidding, but alas ! so seldom favoured with explicit instructions—on this supreme occasion heard the sovereign voice of Britain, and instantly obeyed. I am not sure through what medium these mystical messages reach the consciousness of our rulers at Westminster, but on the strength of Mr. Nicolson's assurance that they sometimes do, and that the said rulers welcome them, I am asking now for a little of your valuable space in which to express what I believe to be in the hearts of many at this moment. Two phenomena confront us now, both fraught with far more significance for good or ill than the Hoare-Laval scheme : the Government's rearmament plan and Herr Hitler's startling new offers. If ever an outburst of public sentiment could reach the Government surely it should be now, and surely it should imperatively demand the curtailment of the first and the acceptance of the second. I am writing in no official capacity—merely as an individual University lecturer at Cambridge—but I am not alone in feeling that *the peace of Europe depends upon the right conduct of our country in this crisis*. These sound hackneyed phrases—alas that they should have become so !—but they are full of terrible and perhaps special significance to those of us who, in the course of our teaching, find that the suffocation of poison gas is, as it were, already choking the young, and that their wills are paralysed and their natural buoyancy checked by their inability to look forward more than a few years through the gathering clouds.

I have only two points to make. First, I should like to make known through your columns that last Friday, March 6th, at the

Cambridge Guildhall, a densely crowded meeting (organised by the C.U. Socialist Club and the C.U. Anti-War Committee, and supported by the C.U. League of Nations Union) passed a resolution which, amongst other clauses, protested against "the extravagant and alarming programme of armaments now being prepared by the Government, which will intensify the military rivalry of the nations and substantially increase the danger of war," and urged the Government to join the Franco-Soviet Pact.

This meeting took place the day before Hitler's speech, and although the significance of the resolution as a protest against rearmament remains intact, I think its last clause needs modifying in the light of the German Chancellor's new challenge. For here is my second point: *Hitler offers Europe twenty-five years of peace.* Time to build a new Europe, a new society, perhaps a new world! A hope that, after all, the impending horror may be averted! We cannot, we must not, allow suspicions of Hitler's sincerity, or the attitude of France, to dash this hope from us irretrievably. Any possible results of trusting Hitler now must needs be preferable to the certain disaster which is the only alternative. In the name of Heaven (I mean this literally, and not as a mere expletive) let us not miss this opportunity. It may be our last.

Pembroke College, Cambridge. BASIL WILLEY

[We wish we could believe that Hitler really offers Europe twenty-five years of peace. Our own view is expressed in our leading article.—ED., *N.S. & N.*].

ABYSSINIA ASSOCIATION

SIR,—Naturally, the number of Englishmen who can give a first-hand account of present-day conditions in Abyssinia is very limited; further, those who could do so have not always the ability or influence necessary to bring their information before the public. On the other hand, there are without doubt powerful influences in this country working to blacken the name of Abyssinia and to extol the "civilising mission" of Italy. Those of us who hope to see Italian aggression checked must view with alarm the false or tendentious reports which are too often used to weaken the case against Italy.

Further, although by the 1930 Convention League assistance was to be given to a State the victim of aggression, ratification of that Convention was made dependent (ironically enough) on ratification of a disarmament agreement. On this ground Abyssinia's request for financial help was lately refused by the League Council.

In these circumstances there is a pressing need for some organisation which would undertake:

(1) To collect and publish correct information on conditions in Abyssinia, and to answer pro-Italian propaganda;

(2) To render direct assistance to the Abyssinian Government by pressing for effective sanctions and financial assistance, and in any other ways which may prove practicable.

Such a body, called the Abyssinia Association, is now being formed. Its objects, in barest outline, are those set out above; but I should add here that no distinction of political party will be made among its members. As a result of private invitation its membership is already fast growing. But if it is to be at all equal to its task the widest publicity is necessary. I believe, Sir, that many of your readers will welcome an opportunity to render some direct service to a gallant nation which, by its vigorous resistance, has aided immeasurably our efforts to uphold what we believe to be the only hope for peace—the status of League membership. I ask them through your columns to give the Abyssinia Association their support. Full information as to membership, etc., may be obtained from the undersigned at the office of the Abyssinia Association, 225 Grand Buildings, Trafalgar Square, W.C.2.

London. H. STANLEY JEVONS
Hon. Secretary

FILM CENSORSHIP

SIR,—Here is a case in point, which reveals how easily Civil Liberties might be sacrificed.

In January of this year the York League of Youth formed a film circle to show films which were not otherwise accessible to the public. *Storm Over Asia* by Pudovkin, was secured for the first show. This was a 16 mm. non-inflam. film; but before the performance the Chief Constable wrote to the management of the hall in which the performance was to be given asking for details. The letter was passed on to the Secretary of the League, and he informed the Chief Constable of the nature of the film. The Chief Constable said the Watch Committee would see the film. Much against the collective will of the Committee, part, at any rate, did see snatches of the film—and it was passed.

But next time the Circle advertised Eisenstein's *October* and the Chief Constable informed the Secretary of the Circle, without more ado that the Committee would not allow a public performance. Such a legal point as that binding the Committee to see the film first was quite disregarded. A private performance was held and the hall was crowded.

A deputation from the League waited upon the Watch Committee. There was never any chance of an understanding being reached. The Committee chose to be undignified, aloof and slightly threatening. In spite of the fact that our own legal advice was that 16 mm. films need not be submitted to the Censor, and that a Watch Committee was surely required to see the films before they banned them, the Committee held to its first position—that they were not going to permit anything which the Censor had not officially passed. We were warned that the matter of our private performance was "up at London" (presumably the Home Office), and if we chose to disregard bans, and give private performances we "must do it at our own discretion."

Doubtless there are many Watch Committees equally willing to be ignorant of the legal position, and many Chief Constables willing to advise the Committees not to permit Left-wing film performances. But surely such facts call for some investigation.

York. W. Y. DALE
Chairman: York League of Youth

THE ALBERT HALL

SIR,—The House of Commons recently found itself obliged to inquire into certain breaches of the peace committed by the followers of Sir Oswald Mosley in the East End of London. Let me draw attention to a curious incident in the West End, which has not yet, so far as I know, been given publicity.

In October last the Albert Hall was leased to Sir Oswald for the purpose of holding a Fascist rally. His meetings, however, rarely afford opportunity to intelligent questioners, and it seemed not unreasonable that the public should be given a chance to examine his philosophy and his programme from another angle, without risk of disorder. A committee co-ordinating Anti-Fascist activities attempted, accordingly, to book the Albert Hall for this purpose. Dates, I understand, were available; nevertheless, this application was refused, no reason for the refusal being given.

In the past the Albert Hall has been leased, with excellent impartiality, to boxers, evangelists, folk-dancers, and prophets of a Second Coming. On what principle was the use of it denied to opponents of a policy of political violence?

48 Queen Anne Street, W.1. HELEN SIMPSON

WOMEN AT THE UNIVERSITIES

SIR,—As a former member of one of the Oxford colleges, I was much interested by two letters in your issue of February 29th. They drew attention to the two distinct types of women undergraduate, both of which were fully represented by the writers of the letters.

Many girls who have come straight from a conventional school which they have reached as a result of ability and a considerable amount of hard work have, as their unique object, study. They do not seek to enjoy the wider opportunities of Oxford life, and even if they should go out on five or six evenings of the week the addresses they sign in the catechismal "gate-book" are irreproachable. These girls do not so much seek to make Oxford a stepping stone from school to reality as to continue there a more intensive school life into whose curriculum a few additional features have been introduced. They are justifiably proud of having reached the University and they are prepared to enjoy every aspect of it without question or protest.

The other type of woman undergraduate—the rebellious one—is drawn principally from the class of girls who have remained at school beyond the age of their debutante friends and, having already resented discipline and restriction for two years, they are more than ever anxious to be entirely free at the University. They regard the rules as so many insults and find their pettiness and illogicality particularly irritating.

Although such girls are in the minority at Oxford, I would venture to suggest that it is their progressive and energetic spirit which has the more salutary effect. Moreover, if they were no

longer hedged about by trivial regulations, the equivocation and deceit to which they have resort in order to evade these regulations would likewise cease. BETTY ELLMAN

29 Weymouth Street, W.1.

SIR,—The point of my last letter was to show that in my own college, at least, a High School atmosphere does not exist. The position of women in this University is a different matter, and no woman who lives an active life can deny that women have an inferior status in the University of Oxford. I, for my part, am trying to work for equality of opportunity. I cannot accept the contention of the undergraduates from Newnham, that the ideal of service arises from an acceptance of inferiority. The term "woman undergraduate" conveys a maturity, which, at eighteen, I feel I do not possess; therefore I sign myself with that admittedly abominable word. UNDERGRADUETTE

Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford.

SOCIAL CREDIT

SIR,—With regard to the correspondence on Social Credit, "A Greenshirt" states (in italics) that "No expert has ever disproved Major Douglas's A plus B theorem."

He will find a detailed refutation of the theorem in H. T. N. Gaitskell's chapter in G. D. H. Cole's book, *What Everybody Wants to Know about Money*. BERNARD W. SILVER

69 Ravenscroft Bldgs., Columbia Road,
Bethnal Green, London, E.2.

SIR,—With reference to Mr. J. A. Franklin's article, "Social Credit Up to Date," in your issue of February 29th last, I suggest that any differences between Social Crediters as to the most effective way of mobilising public opinion towards the end they have in view, viz., the Abolition of Poverty, cannot form a criterion of the value of the Douglas analysis and technique.

Sir Josiah Stamp's opinion notwithstanding, is there, in fact, any natural shortage of goods and services or real wealth of any kind? I submit that the physical evidence of plenty is common knowledge. It may be admitted, of course, that the reserve of coal, for instance, is not unlimited. But surely, experience shows that research and invention have overcome difficulties of this sort. The shortage of nitrates in Germany during the war is a case in point.

There is, I take it, no reasonable doubt that an increase in the purchasing power of each individual of the community, unaccompanied by a rise in prices, would be beneficial in every way, and is none the less desirable for leaving untouched the moral issues involved in the disparity between the incomes of the many and the few.

The opinions of "accepted" experts seem to fascinate your contributor, but are the gentlemen quoted—Sir Josiah Stamp and Mr. R. G. Hawtrey—equally authoritative in their views, shall we say, of Socialism? It seems to me that the layman can judge experts only by results, and the clear evidence of poverty in the midst of plenty shakes my faith in these gentlemen. Their contemptuous attitude to the Douglas analysis would be a little more impressive if the economic system, to which they presumably lend their expertness, were functioning satisfactorily.

To exemplify the morass in which such experts can unconsciously flounder, I am entitled to quote the following dicta of these gentlemen. At intervals during the last eighteen years they have indicated that economic recovery could be effected by:

(*a*) Working more and spending less.
(*b*) Working less and spending more.
(*c*) Going off the gold standard.
(*d*) Returning to the gold standard.

In the circumstances, who can blame the average good citizen for turning towards the light and leading of Major Douglas and similar *realists*? L. B. HIGGINS

119 Ridgeway Drive, Bromley, Kent.

[We cannot blame anyone for suspecting the fallibility of orthodox economists. But the failure of the doctors to cure you when you are ill does not justify you in cutting your throat. —ED., *N.S. & N.*]

THE OXFORD GROUP

SIR,—There is an appropriateness to the situation, which may possibly have escaped its author, in the sonnet in your last issue on the Oxford Group.

"Newman! Thou shouldst be living at this hour." Newman in his own hour was repudiated by most members of the University. Twenty years after he had left it he published the *Apologia*; and Oxford began to be proud of him.

As regards the difference in appreciation of religious movements by contemporaries and by posterity, history is apt to repeat itself; but things are speeded up nowadays, and this time, perhaps, it will do so sooner. B. H. STREETER

Queen's College, Oxford.

Miscellany

CAUCASIAN NOTE

THE country round Tiflis is inhabited by an amazing assortment of peoples: within a radius of eighty miles, there are not only Kakhetian, Turkish, and Greek villages, but also, strangest of all, villages entirely inhabited by Germans. Marienfeld, Freudental, who would imagine that such names are to be found in the middle of a map of Georgia?

We soon decided that we couldn't leave the Caucasus without having seen one of the villages. We had watched, and mixed with, the people of Tiflis during the exuberant early days of May, as they poured chattering and laughing through the tree-lined boulevards, the new shops and the shady gardens, in their white blouses and white skirts, pressing round the ice-cream kiosk or the evening newspaper stall and embracing, slightly tipsy, at the street-corner, enough to be sure that in the towns at any rate life could be good, and a mood of optimism and gaiety prevailed. But what was it like in the countryside? To our desire to see the collective farms at first-hand was added considerable curiosity to find out whether the anti-Soviet propaganda of the Nazis, proclaiming the imminent death by starvation of all Germans in the Soviet Union, was partly true, or just dope. One of our Georgian friends happened to be a young professor who had studied for some time in Germany, and was planning to write a book on these very settlements. He proposed we should visit the largest, Luxemburg, a village of 6,000 inhabitants, lying about fifty miles south of Tiflis towards the borders of the Armenian Republic. By a stroke of good luck, on the very evening before our trip, we happened to meet the editor of the new German paper which had been started in Luxemburg the year before. He looked as if he had come straight out of Hamburg, and the paper whose proofs he was carrying under his arm was called the *Rote Fahne*. He agreed to come with us and show us round.

We started off on a hot, cloudless morning, and once clear of the suburbs of Tiflis were passing through a landscape bare for the most part of trees, with little vine-cultivating villages scattered over it, and bounded on the horizon, west and south, with jagged walls of mountain. The road was empty of traffic, except for an occasional lorry or horseman, and once or twice an enormous flock of sheep and goats, being driven from the plains to the higher summer pastures, in charge of deeply-tanned young men and boys of a startling, wild beauty. Far away in the plain we saw an enormous four-square, deserted fortress, a reminder of the perpetual invasions Georgia suffered in earlier centuries. On the telegraph wires which we followed, large bright blue birds were perched, often the only sign of life between village and village.

Towards midday we came to a valley where the vegetation seemed more luxuriant, and on both sides of the road large vineyards appeared. The editor of the *Rote Fahne* looked at his watch and announced that we were approaching Luxemburg. "They ought to be out of Church by now," he said.

It was a shock to be reminded of Sunday, accustomed as we had been for so long to the six-day week. More of a shock to be coming to a village where Church-going was still, clearly, a not to be ignored activity. But the most surprising thing of

all was the first sight of Luxemburg. I think one might have much the same sort of feeling if one came to a Turkish village unexpectedly in Tyrol or the Black Forest. Cleanly-painted houses with steep gables confronted us, totally unlike any others we had passed, with wistaria growing up to balconies over which a burly, red-faced Swabian type looked down at us, puffing at his pipe, or two little gretchens with blue eyes and blond hair neatly tied in pigtails.

The professor and the editor left us to watch this unreal street, while they went off in search of entertainment for us. Not only was it Sunday, but also market-day for the district, and down the main street came Turks with their horses and wagons to market, their dark faces and thick wool caps in curious contrast to the Germans. It was curious also to see them pass under red banners strung from one side of the street to the other on which were inscribed, in German, anti-fascist slogans, " Release Thälmann ! " and " Revolutionary Greetings to our Heroic German Brothers ! "

Our friends returned and led us up to a house where we were introduced to a tall, grave German and his wife, and a prettily-dressed small girl, their daughter. The living room was sunny and spotlessly clean, and wine and a huge plateful of waffles were produced. After much drinking of healths all round, we settled down to a discussion. There was no doubt about it: collectivisation was at last turning out a success, and the Luxemburgers, being Germans—and therefore industrious—who had come, even though over a century before, from a country with a more highly developed civilisation, had managed to make of it a greater success than the peoples living round them. The " Kirov " had seventy-three brigades and over 1,600 workers, and was the biggest wine farm in Transcaucasia. They were full of pride and confidence. They told us that five years ago they had reorganised after a disastrous and over-hasty start, and formed a tiny collective farm of seven holdings, with three or four horses. By the end of a year there were thirty-five holdings. And now there were nearly eight hundred, which meant that 80 per cent. of the families in the village had joined. And that in spite of the intense emigrant conservatism of the little colony. Now they had five hundred horses, besides tractors and other machinery for the corn side of their farm, and the income had risen to 3½ million roubles. They claimed they had enough corn in reserve to tide them over two bad harvests.

They were rich, and the village grew rich with them. What should they spend their riches on? They had grandiose proposals. On culture they laid particular emphasis. People were to have every opportunity to study and to enjoy the arts. Talkies, a theatre, and a club-house already existed. But they planned a new, four-storeyed club for the whole district, with a theatre to seat 800, that would cost at least 1,200,000 roubles. We had seen the foundations of it as we drove into the village. They were also at work on new buildings for the " Technicum," or technical college, to be ready in 1936, at a cost of about 700,000 roubles, and a new school as well. They were extending and improving the electrical supply of the village, and asphalting the main streets. A proud boast, though to us slightly comic, was that the farm had recently invested in an aeroplane.

Our hosts took us round the village before we left. They showed us the village hunting club—they were all, it seemed, crack marksmen and keen hunters—and then brought us to a barn where the chief brigade leaders, one of them a young woman (who, the professor whispered to us, was the most intelligent of the lot), were holding a meeting. For twenty minutes we listened to the weighty problems of the farm's organisation being argued out, and plans for the next week settled. It was afterwards, as we were walking down to the concert-hall, that we met Hans, Karl, and Heinrich. All three were dressed in smart black trousers and white shirts, and the latest fashion in caps from Tiflis. Eighteen or nineteen years old, fair-haired, tall, and bursting with health, they were fast friends and leading lights in the social life of the village, in its dramatic circles and dance evenings. Karl played the clarinet in both the orchestras of which the village boasted. They were all students at the " Technicum," and had great ambitions. Karl planned to be an electrical engineer, in Moscow, if possible. Hans had decided that his first move, as soon as he had passed his examinations, would be to look for a post in the giant agricultural machinery factory in Rostov. Heini was modest about his language accomplishments. " My weak side, I'm afraid," he said apologetically, " I can speak German and Turkish of course, but my Russian and Georgian aren't quite perfect yet." They seemed to think that the workers in the collective farm had, compared with students like themselves, an easy time of it, with the good things of nature simply falling into their laps. " We have to *work* ! " said Karl, laughing scornfully, when we asked whether they ever joined in the hunts.

Only one of these three was in the Komsomols. Political work, the editor told us, went rather more slowly here than in general in Georgia. This German colony had prided itself on its self-sufficiency, and the Lutheran tradition they had brought with them from Würtemburg was strong. And yet only a few of the younger generation went to Church. Neither Karl, nor Hans, nor Heini believed. The real thing, he told us, that was bringing the older villagers over to Socialism was not so much propaganda as the triumph of the collective farm. Nothing succeeds like success. JOHN LEHMANN

A LETTER FROM PRISON

[This letter, written at Niederschönenfeld in 1922, is one of a collection *Letters from Prison*, translated by R. Ellis Roberts, to be published shortly by John Lane.]

DEAR B——,

What do we simple men know of a deed and its motives? We are much more inclined to rest content and in silence before the Why—why a tree draws blood to its heart from many roots; content to think it would be childish to believe that what we see gives it its bloom and strength.

I have a friend here, a prisoner like myself. He is dearer to me than my brother, because he has such tender feeling and quick, sensitive nerves. When he was a boy of nineteen he stabbed a man: and the convict-prison engulfed him for seven springs, seven summers, seven autumns, seven winters.

How it happened he told me one evening in his cell:

One Sunday he invited a girl for a walk in the English Garden in Munich. They stood by the Monoptoros and were happy in the spring; they laughed at the funny name, secretly pinched each other's arms, kissed openly before everyone; then they went into a tavern, ordered a glass of beer apiece and there they sat, knees touching in sweet warmth.

Opposite their table three fellows were drinking; my friend knew them as men from a builders' yard, skilled masons, proud of their handicraft and looking down on the labourers.

My friend went for a few minutes to the cloakroom, arranged his tie, gave the right twist to his brilliantined holiday curl.

When he came back his girl was in tears; and in answer to his perplexed questions she told him that the three men opposite had called her a " street-walker " and asked her if she did it for sixpence.

" You dirty dogs ! "—my friend jumped at the three, who, swollen with superiority, grinned sneeringly. " You mean scoundrels ! "—and anything else that occurs to the Bavarian peasant to say when his deepest feelings are hurt. The three jumped up and seized their stools; my friend took his knife, and the usual Bavarian Sunday row would have started had not one of the assailants received a mortal blow from the knife, slumped noiselessly to the ground and remained there stiffening. Sudden whirlwind of bewilderment, fright, fear, swept over all in the tavern, landlord and customers,—over my friend and—but more of that later.

My friend saw himself alone; before him lay the dead man in whose breast was a knife and that knife was his.

" You know, I did not grasp it at first. I just felt thirsty, mighty thirsty. One glass of beer! I wanted to order it,

but, as nobody was behind the bar, I went there myself, filled a glass, drank it at one draught: and I was better. At least for a minute. Then it dawned on me what had happened. I rushed out of the tavern, ran through the streets until the evening. It began to rain, the water dripped from my head. I realised that I had no hat. Where have I left my hat, where have I left my hat? It certainly was in the tavern. I was driven back there. I could think of nothing else except, You must get back your hat. I had bought it out of my last wages; a sin to waste it for nothing. Before the tavern were two plain-clothes men; they jumped at me, handcuffed me and brought me to the police-station. The next day I had to watch the body being dissected in the anatomical laboratory; it stank so much I felt very sick. I looked away, the doctor said: 'Just you look at your poor victim, Mister Murderer.' Time and again I was brought before the bench and you know the rest."

On the day of the trial it was obvious that the public prosecutor was hiding a secret up the sleeve of his gown, a secret which, when the time was ripe to disclose it, would bring him honours from his superiors, his colleagues and the Press and a long sentence of hard-labour to the accused.

Shortly before the last witness gave evidence he cleared his throat: "A woman has asked to give evidence." The court decided to hear her.

A limping little woman appeared and made a talkative statement. She had paid a visit to her cousin and on the way home had felt like a glass of stout, as a treat and as a remembrance of her late husband whose birthday she always celebrated by drinking a glass of stout. After she got her drink, everyone suddenly ran away; she could not make out why. She'd crossed herself and then crept quickly under the table. First nothing had happened. Then she saw the poor dead corpse and over him stood the murderer,—not a sign of repentance. He looked at the murdered man for a while and then he ran to the bar and drew himself a glass of beer; and when, after drinking, he licked the froth from the corners of his mouth with his tongue, it had been a stab in her heart. What a man he must be! She asked the court to forgive her for not coming forward till to-day; but from her childhood onwards she'd always been terrified of taking the oath.

"Witness, you described to me the act of the filling of the glass in greater detail" the public prosecutor reminded her in a honeyed voice.

"Yes, when he had filled the glass, he took the skimmer, cleared the froth from the top, turned on the tap again and filled his glass to the brim."

"Was that so, accused?" asked the chairman.

"Yes."

"What were you thinking when you did that? How do you explain your conduct with the skimmer and the froth?"

"I can't remember. But one is so used to doing it. The bar-tenders always cheat. I belong to the society against false measures. I have always looked out for it, and then, when I poured out for myself I behaved that way—because I behave that way—from custom."

The public prosecutor rose for his final speech which was declared by the Press to be "a masterpiece of the forensic art," "broad but also lucid, massively cast without, filigree within."

He made the scene at the bar the centre-piece of his masterly speech, "its revealing soul," as the papers wrote.

"My Lords, never in my long practice have I come across a case in which character and temperament were so clearly, so visibly exposed to the public eye. Not only does the man drink the beer in the presence of his victim; but with cold calculation he decided, in order, as he has said himself, to keep the principles of his society against false measures, that the glass contains too much froth."

And, after having unravelled the legal side of the case with brilliant dialectic, the public prosecutor asks that the plea of extenuating circumstances should be disregarded.

The court could not withstand the speech of the public prosecutor, wrote the Press, and those in court heard the judgment with obvious satisfaction.

ERNST TOLLER

EXTRACTS FROM A JOURNAL

THE downway of the moving staircase at Camden Town had jammed; and people were trying to walk it. Nearly all were the victims of their imagination: some halted every few steps and clung helplessly to the rail, others attempted a bold canter, missed their step and fell. It was an extraordinary sight, like the scenes during a glass frost; but hardly more extraordinary than the antics of these same people when confronted with a new idea, with the writings of a poet who does not offer them that easy passage to which, as ticket-holders through life, they have earned the privilege.

An old woman in the street reading the announcement of a dance "to take place next Saturday"; next Saturday, a year ago.

The dark months, when one is driven indoors, and into oneself.

I saw myself in the lighted window of a restaurant—a waxen pig's head on a dish with closed eyes and a lemon in his mouth.

A cigarette—that eleventh finger of bliss.

What the writer finally conveys is the picture of a man sitting in a room writing. But how many Everests and Babylons, how many New Yorks and Niagaras, he interposes first between the reader and himself!

It's a clear night. Do you see all those stars? And yet I am afraid to walk into a room where there are strangers.

The "tyranny of the human face," which Baudelaire so detested. Yes, and faces lie. But observe people's hands, those spokesmen of which they are less conscious—apostles, dandies, labourers—watch them acting or asleep, and you'll learn worlds!

Darling, I could listen to your voice for ever, if only you spoke Gaelic or Hindustani.

In the Broad Walk, Regent's Park, a squirrel sat eating nuts, both hands to his mouth, looking brightly out of the corner

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of one eye, with his tail bunched up like a young girl with a bustle at a picnic.

" I'm so sorry," he said, smiling ; then recollected and looked away.

Beware of those who write, or utter, Truths. They do not care for Truth, which can only be approached by laying one's hand on all the half-truths and quarter-truths within reach. Besides there are not a dozen Truths in the world, and every shepherd and servant girl knows them already.

What I dislike about nearly all essays and novels is that they take their tone from those connecting-links, bridge-passages or whatever you care to call them, which form nine-tenths of the work and are not individual to the author. The only literary sin of any importance is to dilute one's originality. And that dilution, in some acceptable and graceful form, is the aim of nine hundred and ninety-nine writers out of a thousand. *They* are the anti-artists, and my God as I look over the shelves I can see that they have imposed themselves from the very beginning, that they will always be there, admired, imitated and successful to the end.

To write, or not to write.

Stupidity will triumph, and there's no means of opposing it ; for while the bad man may become good, nothing can convert the stupid from their stupidity.

Just before the two minutes' silence on the day of the King's funeral I saw a girl walking hurriedly past the St. Pancras Post Office. Not a beauty, but what life she had—and her breasts were magnificent ! (I noticed her across the street.) She was young and slender, and with that superb female blossoming she ought to have been the proudest girl in London. But some feeling of shame had made her bend forward from the waist, her hands were clutched under her bosom, she was doing her very best to *shrink !* Everyone of course could see how fine she was, men turned to look back, and women stared—while she hurried on, becoming every moment more awkward in her attempt to conceal what Nature had succeeded in making obvious.

An old nurse : " And next time you come to table mind those puddies are nice and clean, and I shall expect to see your moons."

Sandwichboard men out of *Alice in Wonderland.*

The blind man and his companion : they must walk, arm-in-arm, in step together, faster than other people ; their conversation must be always cheerful.

I remember a sweet-shop where they sold huge quantities of acid-drops. A fat woman used to address me as " Sonny," which annoyed me, so I would stare at the thumb of her left hand, on which by some malformation below the first joint a little extra thumb had sprouted, like a young kangaroo looking out from its pouch.

He wondered if he was really in love, and decided that, lust apart, he loved her profile seen from the left, an unexpected glimpse of her in the street, her image as he sat down to write her a letter.

You, my darling, are like a cloud—one of those plump clouds that lie on the horizon after a calm day, calmly waiting.

In an Oxford Street shop window a pink-faced youth in black was beginning to undress one of the wax models. A shoulder-strap already hung down ; and she was gazing coldly at the passers-by. With a quick gesture, before starting to unbutton her skirt, he covered her face in a duster.

A fine day. Think of all the people it will impel to action—hosing their cars, playing tennis, rolling the lawn, or delivering hearty jokes at breakfast.

A vegetarian lecturer was explaining to his audience that when they eat flesh they acquire some of the qualities possessed by the animal they are eating. " That little *mutton cutlet*, now, that *rasher of bacon*—do you want to be as stupid as sheep and as gross as pigs ? " No, but then I don't want to be a vegetable either, and there is something to be said for Nero guzzling a thousand larks' brains, if it gave him the chance of being like Shelley.—" Oh, Mr.——, you're always so clever, now tell me where do you get your ideas ? " From eating bottled shrimps and drinking corked claret.

Someone should write a book on the secondary sexual characteristics of human beings. Have you ever noticed the strange courting in the street : not, I mean, the spooners and engaged couples, *their* behaviour already conforms to etiquette, but the unattached bands of boys and girls who roam signalling to one another ? The girls, often three together, scream like peacocks with the peculiar excited laughter one only hears from the young female on heat, and the boys lounging under lamp-posts with caps pulled down thrust hands into pockets and watch intently.

At an all-in wrestling match : one woman, with satisfaction, to another : " A proper ape, isn't he ? "

" Brave "—it lost its value after the Georgians saw poppies bravely blowing and the beer bravely flowing ; a pity it's a Union Jack word, for the other morning in sleet and freezing twilight, when I saw the foot-long shoots standing up on the little chestnut by the gate, I thought that really brave.

" You have dropped your handkerchief, Miss McOstrich."
" So I have — but not for you." G. W. STONIER

PLAYS AND PICTURES

" The Frogs," and " Julius Caesar " at Cambridge

If there are persons still so old-fashioned as to deplore the importance attached to Greek in English education, they should see a Greek play as performed every three years at Cambridge. Here the " dead " language—which is indeed never dead while it continues to affect men's thoughts and lives—becomes obviously alive ; and the singular beauty which still visibly haunts the theatres of Epidaurus and Delphi becomes audible from behind the electric footlights. Since comedy supports the ravages of time less lightly than tragedy, it is more difficult to produce Aristophanes than Aeschylus or Sophocles. It is indeed the beauty which illuminates the comedies rather than their wit which makes them imperishable. Or would it not be more accurate to say that it is the Greek power to make beauty and wit meet together, farce and poetry kiss one another, which enchants us in *The Frogs* ? (Shakespeare and Mozart among moderns have a similar power.) The Provost of King's, who produced, triumphantly made manifest the loveliness of the comedy ; he made Dionysus an exquisite ephebe—an intellectual as it were from the *Symposium*, surely far likelier than the pot-bellied toper of tradition to be inspired by reading the *Andromache* to bring Euripides back to life. The Provost further emphasised the lyricism of the play by entrusting the decor to Mr. Geoffrey Wright, who made the chorus of initiates a spectacle of extraordinary beauty. Indeed all his costumes were very distinguished. And Mr. Walter Leigh's music, witty and romantic, also heightened the poetic effect, though its execution was the least satisfactory part of the performance. The broad humour of the play was made more actual to us by skilful touches of anachronism : the beatings and the angry landlady show that the jokes of Athens were close to those of the modern music-hall, and an outsize donkey in the best pantomime tradition seemed entirely appropriate. The verse was spoken with superlative clarity, and a distinguished Hellenist said to us : " The best performance of a Greek play I have ever seen : there were only two false quantities." On less scholarly grounds, we humbly agree with his verdict : the actors were all excellent, expecially the Aeacus, the Euripides, the Dionysus and the Aeschylus. Altogether a hundred details showed that the professional theatre lost, in the Provost, a potential Reinhardt.

Julius Caesar is a play often given by undergraduates and schoolboys, because the female roles are so unimportant. But now that girl undergraduates act, this frigid play deserves a rest. The performance given by the A.D.C. and the Marlowe is up to the best standards of these societies. The verse is spoken beautifully and with understanding : all the faults of professional Shakespeare acting are avoided : the wrong word in the sentence is never emphasised, and there is no ranting. Particularly good are the Antony, who gives the oration ideally well, and the Caesar—the latter a tall, taut, excitingly dignified figure who does effectively bestride the play like a Colossus, until, much too early for the play's health, he is murdered. The costumes are, as far as possible from the traditional bath-towels, Inigo Jones in flavour, and exquisite in colour. Altogether a most thoughtful and pleasure-giving production.

"Red Night" at the Queen's

Mr. Robert Donat shows great courage and great self-denial in producing this play, as his first essay in management; for his own part is easily the least effective and the worst-written of the many characters in the story and unlike most actor-manager parts is very seldom in the limelight. The play has no message, no propaganda to boost and no plot. It is a simple document of life in the trenches and behind the lines and depends entirely for its effect on observation of character and on the reactions of such characters to the strain of environment. It is realistic in what may be termed an *au pied de la puce* manner and has in it something of the unforced directness of Mr. Herbert Read's *Retreat*. But while its merits as a document are considerable, the sentimentality of many of the observations of Private Hardcastle, a soldier with a poet's streak, is often embarrassing, though Mr. Donat's looks and voice, combined with his outstanding acting ability, do much to distract us from the worst of these moments. The play centres round Private Summers, the epitome of the Cockney Tommy, a full-length portrait faithfully delineated. Mr. John Mills gives a superb performance and is Private Summers to the life. Both he and Mr. Donat have been brought up in a hard school and both have in addition to personality that rare thing in England, perfect control of their technique. For those who are interested to see fine acting, an evening can be well spent here, for there are a number of other good sketches, notably by Mr. George Carney and Mr. Bernard Lee, but the play seems a little outmoded.

"The Milky Way" at the Carlton

No one can ever seriously have considered Harold Lloyd a talented comedian. Yet his films make one laugh. What is more, they are often genuinely funny. It isn't easy to account for his success. With an extraordinarily limited range of facial expression, a mere ability to play the fool coupled with the barest acting competence, and no trace of personality whatsoever, he contrives to be heartily amusing. He is simply one out of the herd who falls headlong into farcical situations—and he is America's Mr. Everyman at that, not our own or our neighbours'. Yet the appeal of his films is universal. Everyone who has seen an advertisement knows who this pleasant young American is—well-intentioned, half-educated, the broadest possible recognisable type, the fellow behind any desk or counter. Your twentieth-century average man is a salesman. In *The Milky Way*, as in his previous films (all so easily forgettable), Lloyd has some excellent gags: the taxi-drive with a foal, for instance, is a blissful extravagance. And the rest of the cast has magnanimously been allowed a share in his success; only one of the eight chief parts was uninterestingly played. Adolphe Menjou, that Phoenix of the films, recalls his fine performance in *The Front Page* and Barrymore's in *Twentieth Century*; he is admirably supported. Yes, a thoroughly enjoyable entertainment. The programme includes an attractive G.P.O. film, *Night Mail*, featuring words by W. H. Auden which also "got across" and made the audience giggle.

Arthur Watts' Memorial Exhibition at the Fine Art Society

The Muse of Comic Drawing has emigrated to America, brushing from her feet our British dust. And the little band who keep the flag flying here has been littler still since an aeroplane crashed into the Alps with Arthur Watts on board. The exhibition of his drawings at 148 New Bond Street shows the measure of our loss. You do not need to read the caption or text of the joke, though it may add something—the wit is in the drawing itself. A colossal pylon towering in the garden of a suburban villa; and a mild couple gazing hopefully at a creeper which has climbed about a hundredth of the pylon's height: "It looks a little better already, darling" is the caption—harmless but quite unnecessary. The drawings show a deep understanding of the season-ticket holder. Like most modern English humour, they are usually too kindly. (It was our imperturbable good nature probably which drove that Muse to fly our shores.) What distinguished Arthur Watts above his fellows was his *mise en page*: he took things literally as well as figuratively at an odd angle. In his best drawings there is always something unexpected. He was, in fact, a humorist who saw with the eyes of the imagination.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, March 13th—
- "Back to Methuselah," Parts I and II, Tavistock Little Theatre, Tavistock Place. And on March 14th.

SATURDAY, March 14th—
- Robert Mayer Concert for Children, Central Hall, Westminster, 11.
- Children's Film Society. Paul Rotha on "Great Cargoes," Everyman Cinema, 11.
- Athletics. Oxford *v.* Cambridge, London.
- Alick West on "European Literature," 46 Frith Street, 3.
- Violin and Pianoforte Recital. Victoria and Albert Museum, 3.
- Conference of Friends of the Chinese People. Speeches by Professor Shelley Wang, Mrs. Cecil Chesterton, Lord Marley and others. Friends House, Euston Road, 3–6 and 7.30–10.

SUNDAY, March 15th—
- Moritz Bonn on "From Empire Making to Empire Breaking," Conway, 11.
- Sir John Maynard on "Agriculture in India and the U.S.S.R.," Marx House, Clerkenwell Green, 7.30.
- F. L. Kerran on "Russia To-day," Willoughby Hall, Willoughby Road, 8.
- Hazen Sise on "Planning for the Machine Age," 123 Lupus Street, 8.
- "Toussaint L'Ouverture," Westminster Theatre.
- "Ehen Werden im Himmel Geschlossen," Arts Theatre.

MONDAY, March 16th—
- "Ces Messieurs de la Santé," Everyman Cinema, Hampstead.

TUESDAY, March 17th—
- A Team from Carrs Lane Church on "Team Work for Peace," Friends House, Euston Road, 1.20.
- The New Schools in Action. W. B. Curry on Dartington Hall, Totnes. Adolph Tuck Hall, Woburn House, Upper Woburn Place, 6.30.
- Prof. S. Soddy on "Some Thoughts about the New Economics," Conway Hall, 7.
- Philip Abraham on "Prison from the Inside," Friends House, Euston Road, 8.
- Gerald Heard on "The Problem of Peace," 36 Tavistock Place, 8.

WEDNESDAY, March 18th—
- "The Show that Jack Built," Alhambra.

THURSDAY, March 19th—
- M. I. Maisky (the Russian Ambassador) on "Russia To-day," Livingstone Hall, 8.
- Institute of Psycho-Analysis. Mrs. Joan Riviere on "Envy, Rivalry and Aggression," 36 Gloucester Place, 8.30.

ALL THE
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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

FOR me, Chaplin's *Modern Times* is the greatest of propagandist films not simply because Chaplin is an artist, but because I agree so entirely with his protest against Man's life being that of a machine-server and Man himself reduced to a little whirling cog in one of the gigantic factories exalted by all the idealists, efficiency experts and profiteers to-day. And after watching Chaplin's silent plea for the right of men to be, not whirling wheels, but individual *misfits*, eccentric in thought, feeling and behaviour, it is an odd experience to go on to see and hear Mr. Wells's visions of the future. *Things To Come* is a wonderfully well-designed film; it is a splendid, marvellous piece of production in which Korda has achieved the miracles that H. G. Wells has put into his head. It is a masterly piece of propaganda, too. But what is the message? Surely it is the exact opposite of Chaplin's and of H. G.'s own messages in such books as *Kipps* and *Mr. Polly*? For to that early Wells, as to Chaplin, the life of the individual meant more than the plans of all the engineers of efficiency, in all the stores of Oxford Street. The thing that astonished me most about *Things To Come* was that Mr. Wells appeared absolutely blind to the paradise he reveals to us after the collapse of civilisation, before his supermen start flying again. I would far rather live in Everytown after it has been destroyed than before, or than in the horrible Everytown of the distant future that looks like the inside of a sewing machine. I love ruins and sheepskin coats and the scenery of Piranesi etchings. I like the slow traffic of motor cars drawn by horses much better than that of petrol-driven cars. It would be quieter and less smelly and would give the town an air of delightful makeshift slovenliness which appeals immensely to me. It is true the inhabitants of the town are still at war, but warfare has been robbed of the terrors of high explosive, gunfire, gas and aerial bombardments and there seems reason to hope that firearms will disappear in their turn. There seems to be plenty to eat and drink in Everytown in the nineteen-seventies; the women are beautiful and the children seem nice tousle-heads and not mincing minxes, and I would far rather live under the dear old Boss fourteen hours a day (or even three) than in making subterranean cities of flexible glass that will always have to be rebuilt because they get out of date with every new invention. I went to see *Things To Come* just after reading the White Paper on Rearmament and nothing could have been more consoling: I had never imagined the destroyed world would be so pleasant while the possibility of the machine world rising from its ashes appeared chimerical. It is a comfort to know that if one should survive, life will be so interesting and picturesque.

* * *

Building up the new order would, I suspect, be indistinguishable from working in Chaplin's factory, with no chance of a strike, or a lockout, and the fear of Peace Gas perpetually hanging over one's head. For as Critic pointed out in a notice of the film, "even machines need to be looked after by somebody," and some of Mr. Korda's machines look to me suspiciously like a full-time job. Critic went on to ask: "If mankind has found leisure in Utopia, how does it occupy itself?" The answer, in my opinion, is not to be found in any of the Utopias, but in what is rather a satire on the stupidity of mankind. I mean in *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, a new translation of which, by T. W. Earp and G. W. Stonier, has just been published (Cape, 7*s.* 6*d.*). When their ship comes home, when their annuities fall in, when they leave the office for ever and have time to look about them, then the little cogs in the world's machinery start leading belated lives of their own and reveal what they are made of. Golf for some; competitions in the newspapers for others, hobbies like cabinet-making or assembling wireless for another group. Contemplating such amusements, which fill the suburbs, one may well wonder how on earth Mankind would employ itself in Utopia, into what abysmal dreariness it might not descend. Bouvard and Pécuchet supply the answer: their minds were ignorant, uncritical, untrained, yet they were kingdoms full of inexhaustible treasure. Chaplin and Wells, Critic and I, have all our limitations of interest; walls of padded ennui which keep our spirits from hurling themselves into the immensities for which they are not fitted. Not so the two little copying clerks that Flaubert has chosen as the vehicles of his satire. Their interests are illimitable; their mental universe as various in climate and natural products as the island of Swiss Family Robinson. As Mr. Stonier says in his most illuminating introduction:

> Flaubert studied the bourgeois as a biologist might observe the habits of chimpanzees . . . *Bouvard and Pécuchet* is the story of what would happen if two members of this species were to club together in an effort to escape their surroundings. . . . they engage in a furious search for knowledge. Hardly a question escapes their investigation; at every turn they encounter stupidity and contradiction; the authorities differ, the two pilgrims bump to earth. . . . But as the book advances, the characters of Bouvard and Pécuchet change; they themselves become less ridiculous, the vast panoply of knowledge seems more and more fantastic; and when at the end of their adventures, like tired Jobs, they sit down to copy again, what they are going to copy is the florilegium of nonsense which they have compiled in the course of their search.

They have in short become philosophers; they have become aware of human fallibility in all its branches and are therefore perfectly qualified to inhabit a Utopia.

* * *

It must not be imagined that they are merely types; two little chimpanzees that club together. They are individuals of completely different temperaments held together, not for utilitarian reasons, but because they are fascinated by each other's company. I could not endure living with M. Pécuchet myself and might get tired of Bouvard, but I perfectly understand their attraction for each other. If one is a Bouvard the important thing in life is to meet one's Pécuchet, and no happier life could follow than to imitate these brave and honest Frenchmen. Such figures are not uncommon. Many are the apiaries, orchards, incubators and private printing presses over which Pécuchet has shown me; many are the excursions to excavate neolithic barrows, dig for Roman pottery, map the distribution of bracken, heather, and gorse, or study pond life on which I have followed Bouvard! There are thousands of families that will get an added pleasure from this translation because they will recognise the traits of one or two of their members in its heroes. Incomplete though it is, the book is the greatest of Flaubert's works; *L'Education Sentimentale* and *Madame Bovary* lack its universality and fall below it. This translation has the enormous merit of being alive though it sometimes follows the French too closely to read perfectly as English, thus we do not, in English, speak of a woman "balancing her hips." Such a criticism is not surprising: *Bouvard et Pécuchet* is one of the most difficult books in the world to translate; it is packed with the technical terms of every science and written with a staccato irony almost inimitable in English. The translators have been far more successful in preserving Flaubert's style and speed than in their mastery of individual phrases. In general the translation is accurate, but they have slipped up in attributing the hopeless passions of Pécuchet's early life to Bouvard on page 80. I have immensely enjoyed reading this translation of a book I have been reading on and off for nearly twenty years. Those who meet it now for the first time will find themselves in a fascinating world, the humour of which has been admirably preserved. The first impression of the book is that it is a masterpiece of humour—the most humorous book in French. Longer acquaintance shows that it is a record of one's own spiritual adventures. My own laughter is now always followed by the reflection: J'ai passé par là. Some may feel superior: I identify myself completely with Bouvard; no, never with Pécuchet.

DAVID GARNETT

THE

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JONATHAN CAPE

SCHOOLING, ANCIENT AND MODERN

Sane Schooling. By J. H. SIMPSON. *Faber.* 7s. 6d.
Things Ancient and Modern. By C. A. ALINGTON. *Longmans.* 12s. 6d.

Sane Schooling is the most sensible book that I have read about education. By which I mean not that it expresses my personal opinions and prejudices, but that it is consistently realistic, unbigoted, humane, and based on experience rather than on either theory or tradition. Mr. Simpson had taught in several public schools (including Holt) and had also been a Government Inspector of elementary schools, when he was made the first Head of a new school in which for twelve years he was able to make an enormously important educational experiment. The original object (made possible by a rich patron) was to give to selected boys from elementary schools the advantages of the public school method of education, but not its disadvantages: Mr. Simpson knew the grave faults of the system. He had seen some of them removed by Howson of Holt (who, however, with his "honour" system had added a new and exquisite form of torture to English education) and he had been profoundly influenced by contact with the work of Homer Lane. Soon the original scheme was enlarged to include boys from the ordinary public school class: and *Sane Schooling* describes the methods employed, their practical results, and the general conclusions and principles to be derived from them.

The advantage of educating together boys from different classes can hardly be exaggerated. There is no other civilised country in which class differences are so pronounced as in England, largely because nowhere else are children so rigidly segregated during their education according to their origin. The sons of landowners and of artisans have a lot to learn from one another, but they rarely have the chance to meet, at least until they go to a university. At this school they were given this chance, and one of the most interesting chapters in the book describes the differences between them, and the success with which class-consciousness was overcome. (I suppose this will be distasteful to some Communists as well as to some Tories, and yet a classless school may be expected to produce a desire for a classless state.) For my part I can imagine no more desirable reform than the substitution of such schools as Mr. Simpson's for the present elementary, preparatory, secondary and public schools, which foster and manure in young Englishmen this squalid national characteristic of class-consciousness.

Mr. Simpson combined in his school self-government with the prefect system, by modifying both. The subjects open to decision by the "General Meeting" were limited: and, on the other hand, there was no fagging or beating by prefects. There were some compulsory games, but no game-worship and lots of leisure. The school was definitely Christian, and was not co-educational. Mr. Simpson has an interesting theory that roughly between the ages of thirteen and sixteen boys go through a particular stage when they require to feel a member of a homogeneous group. He favours day schools and the natural contact with the other sex before this period: and he sees the danger of segregating boys after it, but he insists on the value during it of a collective and separated life. Incidentally he suggests that in large schools the houses should be divided horizontally rather than vertically, the boys living throughout with those of their own age. His differentiation between the three stages of growth seem to me one of the most interesting things in the book. Actually he had boys as young as eleven (this he judges to have been a mistake) and as old as nineteen. But the case for this particular method of education rests on its suitability to boys between thirteen and sixteen. The hidebound supporter of the public schools may not think Mr. Simpson's case worth discussion. But I should like to think that the extreme Left among educationists, who pride themselves on being open-minded, will give his book the attention it deserves.

The trouble with "progressive" schools is that they require to be staffed by persons much above the average in wisdom, imagination, and the power to understand and be liked by children. Very often, I feel, their founders modestly give credit to their principles where they ought to give credit to their personalities. In other cases a headmaster's theories may be admirable, and his practice disastrous. The advantage on the other hand of the conventional public school is that it runs largely on its own momentum. A "great" headmaster can give it a new impetus, but it does not depend (fortunately) on a constant supply of men of genius. Mr. Simpson is obviously such a genius, and I should be interested to know how the school has prospered since his departure. In any case his book remains. It is a work of extraordinary wisdom, which I cannot too emphatically recommend.

When one comes straight from the company of such a distinguished man as Mr. Simpson, it is a little difficult to be fair to Dean Alington. The ex-headmaster of Eton is no more conventional in his ideas than most headmasters—in some ways less so. Much of his book is very sympathetic; the thirteen points recommended on page 124 are very sensible and humane. Many of us will applaud his advocacy of Greek in preference to Latin, and his suggestion that the curriculum should concentrate on particular subjects at certain times rather than keep carrying the boys from hour to hour to different subjects. (Incidentally Mr. Simpson agrees with him on both these points.) Also Dr. Alington's very genuine enthusiasm for some aspects of literature must certainly have inspired many of his pupils.

And yet—how stuffy the atmosphere of the book is, how exasperating the constant playfulness! (Is this a nervous *tic* concealing some profound unreadiness to face facts?) The Dean is aware that headmasters and clergymen are less considered than they used to be, and he attempts an apology for the clerical headmaster. But from the Christian point of view it is, I think, undesirable that the head of a public school should be a clergyman. For such headmasters rule, to a greater or less extent, by fear—at least among the younger boys. They may seem like Jehovah, they certainly do not seem like Christ. Dr. Alington himself was never notorious for his aversion from flogging. I am here discussing not whether corporal punishment is advisable, but whether it is Christ-like. If it is not, it must, I suggest, be an unsuitable activity for clergymen. If it is—but can Dean Alington, can anyone, imagine Jesus thrashing a child?

The Dean likes to poke fun at modern follies:

> In those days we had not learnt to despise the "jingling sound of like endings," rhyme had not yet been consigned to that everlasting bonfire in which rhythm bids fair to join it. Perhaps we were all very wrong, but it was very pleasant while it lasted, etc.

You can hear the obsequious giggles with which the lower boys would greet this sally. But someone in the Sixth Form might ask Dr. Alington what modern poet or critic of any reputation is opposed to rhyme. Yeats and Eliot, the Sitwells, Spender and Auden and Empson, all the "leaders of revolt" as far as I know, use rhyme freely. It is true that they sometimes write unrhymed verse, but so did Shakespeare, Milton and some others. In fact Dean Alington is shooting at a non-existent haystack—a practice, one may add, very popular among headmasters, Royal Academicians and ecclesiastical dignitaries.

A graver example of the Dean's remoteness from reality is his attitude to science. I am not referring to his jokes about "stinks"—one may agree that chemistry is not a specially good subject for boys; and indeed the inclusion of chemistry rather than biology in the public school curriculum seems calculated to make science seem unimportant. I am referring to such opinions as these:

> In the sphere of ethics the man of science is justified in his efforts to explain how we came to act as we do, and can give us very great help in the process. He is stepping outside his proper sphere if he tries to explain why we act, or rather why we consider Goodness, however we define it, as a thing worth striving after. The mystery of Goodness—of the preference which all of us, selfish as we are, feel for unselfishness—is entirely beyond his range. To explain it away is to rob all life of its meaning, and in particular to leave completely inexplicable his own unselfish search for Truth, one of the greatest glories of human nature.

The first three sentences seem to show a complete misunderstanding of the nature of science; the fourth comes near to being a contradiction in terms.

The book contains a large number of jokes, some of which are good. And it will certainly be read with pleasure by many Old Etonians. It also does something to explain why Eton is the public school at which it is easiest for odd boys to be happy. Yet at moments I felt that the Dean had more affection and sympathy for Marlborough and Shrewsbury than for Eton. Isn't it a little surprising, by the way, that a classical scholar, who was for years a headmaster, should write "I shall hope" when he means "I hope"? One of the advantages of writing Latin prose, we are often given to understand, is that it teaches one to avoid just such solecisms.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

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MELVILLE ON THE LAND

LIFE upon the quiet sands
Has planted death, with iron hands,
In the waters of the sea
That seek in vain to cover me.

The Beast of Joy with amber jaw
Drifts to me with coral fingers—
Over beds of coral lingers—
And beauties glide within his maw.

His tail is soft beneath the deep
That over splintered men will sweep.
His eyes have watched, where hate's jaws plowed
The deadly sinking of the shroud.

The desperate gallows of the sea
Will seek in vain to cover me.
I see the snail that lifts its head
Out of the carcass of the dead.

I see the fish that move like light
Through skeletons of bleachèd might.
I see bright terraces of gold
That mount above the dead ship's hold.

I see the ghosts of men like lice
On skeletons of shrieking ice :
The mountain-bringing tideless sea.

I once have touched the honeyed lip
Of that great monster, whose white dip
In and out of my reason's ocean
Made my heart leap with a fearful motion.

I once with love did see within
The forests of the tidal fin.
I see men in my body swim,
The folding of their talons dim.

My eyes did fear to look across
Where once was hung the albatross ;
In anguish and in bloody tongue
My eyes embraced the place it hung.

I pass my day in bright despair,
Unpierced by life, in form or air ;
I reach the night, and then in dream
They come to me, in monstrous stream.

The memory of blackened hull
Of a great mother rolling wide,
And under her the sucking bride
Of her late womb. The upreared shell

Of monsters dying towards the sun.
The breaching whale on quiet sea.
The spirit spout of ecstasy.
I move in dream to where they run.

I run to them in ecstasy.
My form and marrow are in their shapes.
My soul in their body found strange shapes.
We moved like heat through the flowering sea.

What bliss was in my peon's hand!
I walk now on the idle land.

What life once broke me in its breath!
That still their tails in fury swing
Throughout my dream! The shadowing
Of once unnumbered fields of death!

What gust once shook me in its flail—
Where did I fall, again, again?
Where did I die, in death again,
Upon the flashings of that tail?

Where did I leap, in skies of blood,
Above the cold eye of that head?

Lashed with the spar he turned and turned,
His belly red with sharpened axe ;
How did I fall, like form of wax,
Upon the red spot where he churned?

How did I see him, eye to eye,
Jaw to jaw fearless, and heart to crack,
As in the minutes that went back
He salt of death did spit, and I!

Then when his eyes upbent to kill
Turned in their sidewise sockets round,
There in the crash and roar of sound,
My soul met his, and both were still.

Down in the deep, below the wreck,
Where soft was seaweed fluttering long,
We seemed to drift, and neck to neck,
We caught our gills in coral's prong.

Ages we lay in warmth and slime,
Age, silent ages, back, grew back,
In the great oceans' ceaseless track,
Back through the towers upbent of Time.

And as we sounded deeper, deep,
Through minds of aeons our souls roared.

The dream is that, the mystery.
I the human man am here,
And all my glory is in that sea.

E. COLEMAN

POEM

Now the leaves are falling fast,
Nurse's flowers will not last;
Nurses to the graves are gone,
And the prams go rolling on.

Whispering neighbours left and right
Pluck us from the real delight;
And the active hands must freeze
Lonely on the separate knees.

Dead in hundreds at our back
Follow wooden in our track,
Arms raised stiffly to reprove
In false attitudes of love.

Starving through the leafless wood,
Trolls run scolding for their food;
And the nightingale is dumb,
And the angel will not come.

Cold, impossible, ahead
Lifts the mountain's lovely head,
Whose white waterfalls could bless
Travellers in their last distress.

W. H. AUDEN

HONEYMOON

For better for worse forsaking all other
just one moment please click thankyou
ding dangdong peals from the tower
the clans greet us and pass
to the sungreen garden a crowded hour
champagne and cake on the grass
how are you simon we last met
when aunt julia was buried
four oclock lord we must get
changed I hate being hurried
Dongdang prayou all in honour of us
nice to sit on soft traincushions
firstclass how grand braincushions
comfort for shyness alone.
Dover hotel
tired but taut alert
straining to act like casual visitors
our suitcases smell glossily new
harbour lights twinkle ripple
then the nightingale boccaccio yes but others
calling echoing from silent cliffs until the day break
each hour a clock mutters.

A picture till now a name printed on a map
florence is real clatter honk
sunsmelly ravinestreets traminfested squares
cars and bicycles riot
palaces jostling slummy lairs
painted churches dimquiet
tawny faces voices delight us
who stammer hugo-aided
hillscattered milkwhite villas invite us
swimmingpools cypress-shaded
And each evening fireflies flash and glitter
by wistaria luxuriating on stone walls
and cool alice smiles
bids gli sposini welcome.
Station after station
goodbye to the olives sunshine
switzerland and france in wet darkness
paris at dawn dreary cabbageleaves
calais train noisy english
they bang and shout as children fearing silence
but we are going to our new home happily ever after
believers shall not make haste.

B. CRAWLEY

HOMO DICITUR RATIONALIS . . .

Illud hominis, quo ceteris animalibus anteponitur, non est aliquid corporale vel corporalis forma, sed est intellectus: ratio autem in homine habet locum dominantis et non locum subiecti dominio.—*St. Thomas Aquinas.*

Nature I hate and what's unnatural choose
For rule of life, rather than hourly lose

The sense of separateness from the common world,
Admit a likeness which I never willed

To all that's human, similar and mean:
Rather the animal than the inane,

The rational without reason, without sense
The sensible, devoid of innocence,

The monkey-antics of the human child:
Better the native mischief and the wild

Malice of the ape, the young baboon
Or chimpanzee, than suffer with slow scorn

The usual mother's loving lunacy,
Suckling her child in human foolery:

Nor love the more the adult with his power
To greater harm, his procreative hour

Now come, yet nothing makes to justify
The sterile motions of his ecstasy.

Of the unequal, I assert the sense,
The valued quality, the difference.

A. L. ROWSE

QUIETUS

If self be dead, what needs it then to live
In the eyes of others? If the self be dead,
All passions rendered, all affections bred
From that old self, all loyalties, the brief
Of honour, and the testament of fame,
Writ in the hearts of those who loved us well,
Are empty. Self is dead. We are a name.
Breath but sustains the semblance of a shell.
If so, to those who loved, what pain, what grief,
If self's poor husk we slay, now self is gone?
Nay rather, we'll afford them all relief
In knowledge of our sweet oblivion.
Leave epitaphs to some dull elegist,
And make quietus with a hempen twist.

R. J. MANNING

IS THIS THE FACE?

Woman. An Historical, Gynaecological and Anthropological Compendium. By HERMANN HEINRICH PLOSS, MAX BARTELS and PAUL BARTELS. Edited by ERIC JOHN DINGWALL. Three volumes. *Heinemann* (*Medical Books*). £8 8*s*.

There are certain pairs of names joined so closely together by long habit that man cannot put them asunder. Pyramus is hardly conceivable without Thisbe; Swan, without Edgar. Liddell implies Scott and Marx, Engels—or, alternatively, Spencer. Among these pairs of wedded names, those of Ploss and Bartels occupy a modest, but secure, position. In the temple of sexological fame they have a niche reserved in perpetuity.

Till recently, I confess, these inseparable names were merely names, so far as I was concerned, and no more. They were familiar from a thousand references in the footnotes to "the literature." But I had always lacked the courage to strike up a first-hand acquaintance with their original German. Now, in three vast and profusely illustrated volumes, Ploss and Bartels make their bow to English readers and I, as an English reader, return the salute, full of an appalled admiration for so much industry, such accumulations of knowledge.

But what a queer, confused haggis of a book this *Woman* is!

MACMILLAN

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MACMILLAN

"It is not meant," writes Mr. Dingwall, in his preface to the translation, "to be a modern feminine encyclopaedia. It serves rather as a compendium, of which Woman is the centre." Again, "errors of fact remain and are intended to remain since much of the material is inserted to illustrate the ideas and methods of the past." The result is that the reader who is not universally learned never quite knows where he is. Any given statement may be trustworthy or may, on the contrary, be an error of fact or a false inference, preserved in order to illustrate the workings of the sexological mind between the seventies of last century, when Dr. Ploss was working on the first edition of the book, and the first year of the World War, when the younger of the Bartelses died. Occasionally, it is true, Mr. Dingwall gives warning in footnotes or between square brackets; but for the most part the reader is left to rely on his own erudition. And if he has no erudition he may very easily make a fool of himself. This would matter very little, if it were made easy for him to acquire from these volumes some at least of the knowledge he lacks. Unfortunately, it has been made extremely difficult. The present edition of *Woman* is without an index and, though all books mentioned in the text are listed in a bibliography at the end of the third volume, no references to page numbers are given. A learned book without an index and full references is like a saw without a handle—a valuable instrument rendered almost unfit for use.

To review systematically such a book as this would be, I imagine, hardly possible even for the most erudite. For me, it is entirely out of the question. I can do no more than comment on a few of the chapters and isolated passages which I found particularly interesting, odd or inadequate and proceed to some reflections at large on the subject in its entirety.

In the first volume, the chapter on the various ideals of feminine beauty current at different times and places is, like many other chapters of this compilation, too short and unsystematic. The subject of the changing fashions in the female shape is one of extraordinary interest. Modern Europe has adopted the standard of feminine beauty regarded as ideal by the Greeks at a time when pederasty was esteemed above heterosexuality and the proportions of the male figure were considered to be intrinsically more beautiful than those of the female. The women of the West make desperate efforts to conform to this, biologically speaking, preposterous standard of beauty—with disastrous results to health and happiness. In India, one is glad to find, women have not been subjected to the dangerous influence of homosexual philosophers. There, the refreshingly unplatonic girls are expected to "walk slowly under the burden of their mounded thighs, and with the majesty of elephants." It is also interesting to learn that "wherever Islam has held sway, the preference for fat women appears." Mohammed's favourite wife, Ayesha, was well covered.

The chapter on Chinese foot-binding is of great interest and illustrated by really terrifying X-ray photographs. One wonders, however, why the authors should have taken the trouble to quote from a gentleman who explains foot-binding as a custom due to the "high degree of lubricity natural to the Chinese." How can anybody know what is "natural" to four hundred millions of individuals? Ploss and the Bartelses evidently had a weakness for this kind of dashing generalisation. Thus, the silliest chatter about "the American Woman" is recorded; and we are gravely treated to a statement, made in 1859 by a German who lived in Tiflis, that "a Scottish woman faints at the sight of a man with a beard."

Professor K. Muller, it is interesting to know, "discovered 111 quite distinct names for the genital organ of women in the written literature of the Old German tongue and its dialects." A remarkable symptom of Nordic superiority, against which, however, must be set the fact that "Martin Luther knew no means of self-defence against the Devil except the exposure of his own hind quarters."

The chapters on female adornment are a catalogue of fantastic and depressing facts. Fashion is a topiary art and the human body has been treated as trees are treated by Japanese gardeners. Thus, in Spain, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the breasts of young girls were covered with lead plates, so that they should not develop. Mr. Dingwall cites a modern recrudescence of this practice. In 1921 an American company, called the Boyishform Brassiere Co., was advertising devices which would "give you that boy-like flat appearance." (Yet another triumph of Platonism!)

The chapter on prostitution is good as far as it goes, but rather inadequate. That on abortion, however, is very well documented. It is here that Mr. Dingwall risks a generalisation almost as dangerously sweeping as those of Ploss and the Bartelses. "The refusal of young women to allow their temporary lovers to employ preventive measures is now sufficiently well known, and their reasons are invariably that abortions are now so easily obtained that it is unnecessary." How "well known" is this practice? And in what proportion of cases?

The chapter on child-birth is full of valuable historical material and is remarkable for having among its illustrations a photograph of an Aztec statue of a woman in labour, which for sheer intensity of horror surpasses any work of art I have ever seen, even among the productions of those supreme masters of the appalling, the ancient Mexicans.

Woman is not a particularly cheerful book—in fact, it is extremely depressing. (It is for this reason that I would keep it out of the hands of the young. A work so gruesomely anaphrodisiac as this might easily plunge an adolescent into a positively Early-Christian horror of the female sex.) To start with, there is the unkindness of nature. The number of extraordinarily unpleasant things that can happen to women is incredible. In many cases horror is combined with a sort of hideously fantastic humour. The lithopaedion, for example, is one of nature's most extravagant inventions. The thing is a child which fails to get born and becomes petrified in the womb, where it may remain, a limestone fossil, for half a life-time. And this is one of the rarest and least painful ills that women are heiresses to.

Much worse even than the tricks played by nature are those devised by human beings. Scarrings, deformations, manglings, Procrustean stretchings and compressions—the illustrated catalogue of these gratuitous inflictions of suffering fills literally hundreds of pages. There is no physical outrage that human beings have not imagined and, what is worse, systematically practised. The section on infibulation, for example, reads like a passage from the Marquis de Sade. To these physical outrages must be added the interminable list of long-drawn mental tortures, of which women, even more than men, have been made the victims. An unbelievable sum of ingenuity has been spent by men and women in making themselves suffer and in devising means for inflicting pain, discomfort and misery upon their fellows.

We may derive a certain comfort from the very extravagance and variety of the modes of malevolent behaviour described in this book. Human beings, it is evident, are capable of any kind of thought or action, however far-fetched, unlikely and extravagant, however disadvantageous to themselves. This being so, there seems to be no reason why they should not some day, by luck or good management, deviate into sense and decency. If they are capable of everything, they are capable even of that.

ALDOUS HUXLEY

MODERN VERSE

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"Anthologies, roughly speaking, are of two kinds: inclusive and exclusive," writes Mr. I. M. Parsons in his introduction to *The Progress of Poetry*, and he claims that his own is selective. But like almost everybody anthologising or writing about poetry to-day he does not dare admit that his selection has no other foundation than himself, but seeks to conceal himself in some scientific haystack. Even the haystack—which might, I admit, be an amusing construction—is not admittedly a "haystack," but is disguised as a "principle" in deference to the contemporary idolatry of pseudo-science before which—Mr. T. S. Eliot, Mr. I. A. Richards and Mr. Herbert Read, having made various preliminary profound and reverential bows—all the not yet individualised young have proceeded to prostrate themselves. The spectacle of Mr. St. John Ervine and his generation genuflexing before the Past is as little exhilarating as the spectacle of Mr. Michael Roberts and his contemporaries doing the like before the Present; for Mr. Roberts's Present will in due time become Past and be the idol of future St. John Ervines, while Mr. Ervine's Past will become the Present of future Mr. Robertses.

I must confess that I read with amazement the confident and dogmatic pronouncements of Mr. Parsons and Mr. Roberts. Mr. Parsons who says not that he selects what pleases him best,

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but " poems representative of the best of the poets who have been writing during the last fifty or sixty years," writes with a naivety that would be simply astounding were it not so representative of a certain superficiality current nowadays, when so famous and so gifted a writer as Mr. H. G. Wells can write of God and the Future as if the world began when Blériot flew across the English Channel in 1909. Statements such as " Ours then is a period of more than normal development " are slap-dashed at one on almost every page, betraying not only lack of thought, but a sort of general inhibition of any capacity for reflection. Similar characteristics of what I should call the half-baked style abound in Mr. Roberts's introduction, for Mr. Roberts is much more verbose than Mr. Parsons. One feels in reading Mr. Roberts that he is struggling into print before he has begun to clarify his own ideas and " that those who have not felt some adumbration of such a crisis, the expression and resolution of conflict and disorder must appear like the strained muscles and distorted features of a strong man pretending to lift stupendous but non-existent weights."

Mr. Roberts obviously has some natural gift for writing, otherwise his own words would not describe so well the impression I get from reading his introduction, but much of his writing might give one the impression of watching an actor on the stage without a part who is grimacing and gesturing, thumping his chest and beating his forehead, muttering and ejaculating to compensate the audience for the absence of any play. But one may get an even worse impression from reading Mr. Roberts and all such contemporary critics whose heads have not been strong enough to withstand the theorising of Freud and the other psycho-analysts. There are many people (but critics should not be among them) whose critical faculty is annihilated by any novelty. Numbers of *clercs* to-day have had their minds theory-eaten until they have become like cheeses that have lost their integrity and turned entirely into cheese-mites. This empty intellectualism reminds me strongly of the age of scholasticism at its worst, when the brains of many able men were turned into a network of intellectual subtleties out of which all substance had disappeared, and I dare prophesy that all the psycho-analytical jargon of to-day current in literary criticism will, in less than a hundred years, be considered mere childish nonsense.

The inability to make an integrated response to works of art is one of the most disquieting features of all present-day criticism. The critic approaches everything with a preconceived theory like a carpenter with a foot-rule or in the worst case he just wants to be up to date and in the fashion. Social snobbery may have declined, but intellectual snobbery is on the increase. It is just as well for the layman to be a snob since, after all, he cannot be expected to trust his own judgment, but when critics become snobs and struggle to keep abreast of the times one can only begin to laugh.

To what can one ascribe the absence of the name of Robert Bridges in Mr. Roberts's *Faber Book of Modern Verse*, which begins with Hopkins and ends with David Gascoyne, but to intellectual cowardice or incapacity? Does Mr. Roberts seriously believe that Robert Bridges, whom he does not include, is inferior as a poet to Laura Riding, whom he does include? I do not rank Robert Bridges *very* high as a poet, but I am willing to make my name mud in the eyes of all present-day snobs by declaring my belief that anyone who includes Laura Riding in an anthology ought also to include John Masefield—which Mr. Roberts fails to do. Any reader who does not understand that sentence is excused. It is not meant for him.

Mr. Mégroz is the most inclusive of these three anthologisers; he even includes Mr. Michael Roberts, who must be as shocked as I am at some of the company he finds himself in. But Mr. Mégroz does include Edgell Rickword who is ignored by the other two. On the other hand, inclusive as Mr. Mégroz is, he does not give anything from Hart Crane (perhaps because he is American?), but Hart Crane was an interesting poet and his representation is one of the virtues of Mr. Roberts's anthology. In fact, whether by accident, or for some obscure psycho-analytical reason—such as that all three anthologisers (all anthologisers indeed!) are unconscious admirers of the worst poetry and as compensation put in their anthologies as much as they can of the best in order to torture themselves—it must be admitted that the lover of poetry will find much to enjoy in each of these three volumes.

In every case the feast we are invited to is much superior to the preliminary grace that is offered up. Poetry, modern or ancient, does not need the sort of championing provided by Mr. Parsons and Mr. Roberts, which smacks too much of the commercial salesman introducing the season's novelties. The commercial salesman has the advantages of not claiming for his novelties that they are better than those of any previous season; he only claims that they are new. Such advocates for " modern " poetry as Mr. Parsons and Mr. Roberts will be completely in the soup in another ten years when the Parsonses and Robertses of that day come into the field with poetry that is really modern. Personally I refuse to allow that any poem once it has been publicly printed can properly be called modern. The only modern poetry is the poetry of the future. Unhappily, neither Mr. Parsons nor Mr. Roberts show any signs of knowing what the Poetry of the Future will be. Therefore I take leave to call them a pair of old-fashioned fogeys.

W. J. TURNER

A STYLIST AT WAR

Fine Writing. By LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH. *Oxford.* 2s. 6d.

Mr. Pearsall Smith, exasperated by the recent crying down of fine writing by certain modern critics and writers, has set himself, with his usual felicitous ease and grace, and more than his usual vigour, to cry it up. He tilts against Mr. Herbert Read, Mr. Middleton Murry, " several members of the flourishing school of Cambridge criticism," and all those who shudder at magniloquence, who cast cold, captious and contemptuous eyes at the grand manner, at the prose of Sir Thomas Browne, of Milton, of Jeremy Taylor, of the magnificent Elizabethans, at the delicate mimical archaisms of Lamb, the exquisite patterning of Pater, the intricate periods of Henry James, and all those other writers who have fonded on language for its own sake and have been curious to polish and fine a phrase.

It is an old battle. A century and more ago, Isaac d'Israeli, himself a charming, but an unmusical and stilted writer, rejoiced that " the embarrassed periods of Hooker, Raleigh and Clarendon will no more languish on the ear." And now certain critics, armed to the teeth with the mixed weapons dropped about by earnest continentals and trans-Atlanticists (such as Teutonic psychologists, French surrealists, Marxist ideologists, Italian aesthetic critics, and American toughs) are trying to shoot up the rich and lovely growth of English prose. I am so much with Mr. Pearsall Smith in this language feud, that I can scarcely bring myself to find flaws in his over-statement of the case; for I feel that such cases should be over-stated.

" You must beware of thinking too much about Style," said a kindly adviser to Mr. Pearsall Smith long ago (see *Trivia*), " or you will become like those fastidious people who polish and polish until there is nothing left."

" Then there really are such people? " he asked eagerly . . .

He is now once again bidden to beware of them, to flee " the terrible attraction of words." " The young writer is warned against rhythmical effects and the use of images, and told that any conscious care for such devices . . . must be carefully eschewed." Such warnings, says Mr. Pearsall Smith, are, at the present time, little needed. Carrying the war into the enemy's camp, he joins battle with those who " promulgate aesthetic dogmas in unwieldy sentences," and imputes to them, " not perhaps unspitefully," " a certain deficiency in aesthetic sensibility." He quotes Lytton Strachey on the great gulf that yawns between those who like magnificence in prose and those who hate it, and adds that still more profound is the gulf between those who value the informational elements of literature, its truthfulness as a transcript of experience, its penetration into the secrets of life and feeling, and those who take more interest in the musical and creative potency of language. He perhaps magnifies this gulf, which has been, after all, bridged by most great writers. On which side of it, for instance, would one place Shakespeare? Or Chaucer? Or Montaigne? Or the Elizabethan travel-writers? Or Henry James? Or Gibbon? It is true that there stand conspicuous figures definitely on each side, and probably most of us know to which side we personally incline. But, should the gulf widen, it must eventually swallow literature up.

I think Mr. Pearsall Smith probably over-estimates the danger from the anti-stylist critics; it is far less than that from those who, from incompetence or insensibility, cannot achieve style. There have always been those who have no use for literary dandyism, and always those who have, to the best of their ability, practised it. There may be more doing so now than Mr. Pearsall Smith, in his anxiety, thinks; more writers than swim into his ken may be even now polishing away at phrases, delving away for words, serenely undeterred by these literary warnings. And

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graceful, elegant and musical prose seems more palatable to the general than Mr. Pearsall Smith here admits. Does not *Religio Medici*, in soft suede binding with ribbon marker, sell in its thousands each year? Does not Elia? Does not "that great, solemn, heraldic, hierarchic animal, the Authorised Translation of the Bible, whose pages of magnificent prose have never been surpassed"? Nor, I believe, are *Trivia* or *Eminent Victorians*, those masterpieces of delicate ironic style, suffered to go out of print, though Mr. Pearsall Smith holds that most readers do not care for irony or for style. It is true that, as he says, Henry James was not a popular writer; but then his needlework was too fine and small; it strains the eyes. For that matter, Hardy, "that famous master of clumsy phrases and undistinguished diction," is not popular either. I think here Mr. Pearsall Smith does less than justice to that poor irritating butt, the general reader. And less than justice too to Cambridge, which, he declares with unashamed Oxford malice, has not, since Tennyson left it, sent into the world more than one or two conscious verbal artists. I can think of a dozen straight off. As to those maligned beings, women, when he agrees with Sainte-Beuve that they "seldom or never exercise any conscious choice of words," all he can really mean is that they don't do it so competently as men, which applies, surely, to nearly every activity of this somewhat inefficient sex. America, too, may have something to reply to its wholesale indictment. But, as I said, I am too much in agreement with most of this engaging, entertaining and timely plea for "prose full of poetry and colour" by one of our finest witty stylists to want to pick holes. It is stimulating and delightful to read, and deserves distribution about schools and colleges. For "is there" (as the author has asked elsewhere) "any solace like the solace and consolation of language"?

ROSE MACAULAY

A PORTRAIT IN VITRIOL

Dramatis Personae. By W. B. YEATS. *Cuala Press.* 12s. 6d.

This little book is too full of explosive matter to be called a mere appendix to the *Autobiographies*. It is written in moments of more slippered ease, and its rhythms are those of conversation rather than of prose; the conversation offered during the indolent moods of a man exhausted by hard work. It is ejaculatory, and from that form its deadly effect springs. The short sentences, projected as it were over the poet's shoulder, are shot like arrows. They make a comic Sebastian of the chief sitter, George Moore.

We are shown him first, sitting in the Paris cafés, acquiring copious inaccurate French, "a man carved out of a turnip, looking out of astonished eyes." To the end that helpless astonishment remains. "A revolutionary in revolt against the ignorant catholicism of Mayo, he chose for master Zola as another might have chosen Karl Marx. Even to conversation and acted plays, he gave an inattentive ear, instincts incapable of clear expression deafened him and blinded him; he was Milton's lion, rising up, pawing out of the earth, but, unlike that lion, stuck half-way. He reached to middle life ignorant even of small practical details. He said to a friend: 'How do you keep your pants from falling about your knees?' 'Oh,' said the friend, 'I put my braces through the little tapes that are sewn there for the purpose!' A few days later, he thanked the friend with emotion."

That is the method of this cruel, distilled Celtic malice; from the general to the particular, from the aesthetic to the personal. Nothing is left of the victim, except the whole man, the indestructible contradiction, George Moore. The reader is left with the sense of a consummate work of art, half playful fantasy, half the effort of a poet outraged by the prospect of another potential artist self-deceived into a false technique. The relationship between the two men remains mysterious, for frequently the poet's stabbing cruelty results in a caress; a caress that draws blood. "I look back with some remorse. 'Yeats,' Moore had said, 'a man can only have one conscience, mine is artistic.' Had I abandoned my plot and made him write the novel, he might have put beside *Muslin* and *The Lake* a third masterpiece, but I was young, vain, self-righteous and bent on proving myself a man of action." That conclusion to the story of a quarrel between the two men about a plot which Yeats used for a play, and which Moore wanted to use for a novel, reveals the uneasiness, the element of fatality, in the attitude of the poet toward the novelist.

It is a sign, too, of this poet's secret of constant regeneration, and leads us to an understanding of that force in his personality which has made his later poetry so much more valuable to our modern generations than is his earlier work. He says, "A writer must die every day he lives, be reborn, as it is said in the Burial Service, an incorruptible self, that self opposite of all that he has named himself." Perhaps that explains why Mr. Yeats is also constantly reassessing his friends and his enemies. He, and they in him, are perpetually alive, perpetually youthful. And that is the greatest tribute and service that a man can offer to his fellows. He shares his claim to immortality with them.

The book contains also portraits of the other familiar figures of the group, particularly of Lady Gregory. This portrait is painted in shadow, with a melancholy sense of unattainable beauty of character, against a background of the rooms of Coole, and the parklands beyond. It shows Yeats most solitary amid his long-matured social creation, a being detached from the elaborate environment with which he has surrounded himself. The book contains, also, more direct self-revelations, particularly one that throws much light on the later development of his poetry. Turning momentarily from Moore, he says, "Because his mind was argumentative, abstract, diagrammatic, mine sensuous, concrete, rhythmical, we argued about words. In later years through much knowledge of the stage, through the exfoliation of my own style, I learnt that occasional prosaic words gave the impression of an active man speaking. In dream poetry, in *Kubla Khan*, in the *Secret Stream*, every line, every word, can carry its unanalysable, rich associations; but if we dramatise some possible singer or speaker we remember that he is moved by one thing at a time, certain words must be dull and numb. Here and there in correcting my early poems I have introduced such numbness and dullness, turned, for instance, 'the curd-pale moon' into the 'brilliant moon,' that all might seem, as it were, remembered with indifference, except some one vivid image."

Obviously, this is a most valuable little book for those people who appreciate the greatness of this man's poetry. And they are many.

RICHARD CHURCH

JACOBEAN DRAMA

The Jacobean Drama. By U. M. ELLIS-FERMOR. *Methuen.* 12s. 6d.

The Jacobean drama, says Mr. Ellis-Fermor, is built upon a sense of defeat, and of complete cleavage between the actual and spiritual worlds—what is "valid in the one" being found "meaningless in the other." This cleavage began in Marlowe, who, "a true pragmatic Elizabethan," met its difficulties by accepting the immediate and throwing away the supernatural; and most of the succeeding dramatists repeated, in one way or other, Marlowe's choice. Several reasons are suggested for this positive and at the same time defeatist state of mind. It was the natural sequel to Elizabethan aspirations: it was the concomitant of political insecurity: it evolved largely out of the preoccupation with Machiavelli's supposed thought.

> When we look up to heaven, we confound
> Knowledge with knowledge—

and so they "concluded" to look up as seldom as possible. In *Measure for Measure* we reach a "nadir of disgust and cynicism": then at last, especially in Shakespeare's final comedies and the work of Ford, comes a "resolution," a "synthesis," a "transmutation," a "perception of the oneness of all knowledge." I quote Mr. Fermor's expressions—though I am inclined to prefer others, which he also uses: "The great questions died down . . . the storm had blown itself out." And all so rapidly!

Mr. Fermor illustrates his thesis by separate studies of the major dramatists from Chapman to Ford. Here and throughout, he deserves the praise due to good, honest work. There is a great deal of stuff in him; he has all the material, and the material on the material, at his fingers' ends, and if he says little that is really new, at least he keeps his head, and keeps his eye on the object, with a steadiness not always achieved by critics of more brilliance and originality. (Mr. Wilson Knight, for instance, in whose hands *Timon* figures as the sublimest of tragedies, and *Measure for Measure* as a beautiful redemption-play.) Some of us, however, remain ill at ease with the criticism which expounds poetry in terms of Truth: which writes (as Mr. Fermor does) of the "findings" of Jacobean drama, of Tourneur's "definite affirmation" of evil, or of Ford's "illumination convincing us that evil never was." (Yet Ford himself is said to have "moral obliquity": can such things be?) At times Mr. Fermor's theory, or pursuit of "oneness," has got in his light: a good example is the chapter on Tourneur. He does admirable justice to the "taste of brass," to the automata "horrible because . . .

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they are so nearly human," but to say that this nightmare effect ever " blinds us to the absence of tragic pity " is surely inaccurate, and still more to say that horror is " strictly speaking, the only emotion roused." Tourneur *amuses;* side by side with his diabolism, he is a witty writer, exciting one moment a shudder, but the next, very likely, laughter and applause. A great part of the *Atheist's Tragedy* is even cheerful (Churton Collins, going to the other extreme, thought it a sweet play, " the mate of Shakespeare's earlier romances "). Again, Mr. Fermor is now and then inclined (if an amateur may without impertinence say so of an expert) to observe too much; for instance, he gravely discusses *why* Castabella was so anxious to preserve her virginity during the wrong marriage, when surely it is quite enough to regard her as a stage heroine being saved up for Charlemont.

Ford, the prophet of the " still-shining stars " is Mr. Fermor's chief pet—and no wonder. Ford is an anomaly. Look at his heroines: the best epithet for them is " ladylike "—they are so exquisitely bred that Anne Elliot might have approved them—but they can't let go at all; let them attempt an outburst, and without warning they become viragos—fishwives. So with their creator: he must keep still. And then, along with the " continence " which Mr. Fermor distinguishes as his great virtue, there is a strain of prurient insinuation unknown to more brutal writers; *Love's Sacrifice*, the play by which Gifford was so justly scandalised, is wrecked precisely by falling between these two stools. I do not think Mr. Fermor makes quite enough of Ford's moral lapses. On the other hand, his refinement and moral beauty can be so enchanting as to put all drama to an end; one of his husbands almost stops the piece by declining to feel jealous at the appropriate moment, and the *Lover's Melancholy* has this much in common with the *Tempest*, that in both of them the action is over from the beginning—we feel no suspense. Even the *Broken Heart* is at heart a mere tableau. This is no generous liquor, nor even the clear cold water " of Mr. Fermor's simile—it is more like a very faint and exquisite Chinese soup.

The chapter on Shakespeare suffers more than the rest from uncongenial abstractions. For instance, after pointing out that Shakespeare, confronted with the hypothetical Machiavellian, remarked not (like Marlowe) " How glorious! " but " What is the *matter* with him? " Mr. Fermor continues: " And when Shakespeare satisfied himself that the Machiavellian system as it was transmitted contained no valid solution of social or political problems . . ." Is this language quite appropriate? Surely Shakespeare got past the ideal in question by the shorter cut of not being much impressed: he could sympathise with the bold yet calculating egotist, but not get drunk on him, and his Richard III, though thoroughly successful, is a *small* figure. As for the " transmutation," Mr. Fermor did not persuade me out of an equal readiness to call it " escape." Why not? Say what one will, great art lies not in the reproduction of fact, but in the satisfaction of desire—it is all wish-fulfilment. Of course, desire is closely involved with experience, and a breast " nail'd to the earth with grief " will probably demand, in art, some recognition of that grief: but why a bald recognition? If the last scene of the *Winter's Tale*, for instance, is not pure " escape," pure wish-fulfilment, there is no such thing: if it is not at the same time exquisitely satisfying—let us give up art, and take to the glorification of photography.

Mr. Fermor's honest industry culminates in a long appendix, containing biographical notes on his eleven dramatists (excluding Shakespeare), an account of the " theatre war," and a bibliography. He will send one back with renewed excitement to the Jacobean drama—and it may be doubted if the best critic does much more.

K. JOHN

OBJECTIVITY

England, 1870-1914. By R. C. K. ENSOR. *Oxford University Press.* 15s.

This is the second volume in the Oxford History of England, and it is a work of quite outstanding merit. Solid, written in an interesting and, at times, distinguished style, based on an astonishingly thorough survey of the materials, it is the annalistic type of history at its best. There is little that Mr. Ensor omits, and there are certain phases of the development he records upon which his account is better than in any other similar volume. On army reform, on constitutional change, on local government, he gives a masterly summary of the complicated issues. As a narrator, moreover, Mr. Ensor holds the reader's attention throughout. It will be long before this volume can, so far as its type is concerned, surrender the primacy it at once establishes.

It is important to realise just what the type is. Mr. Ensor is profoundly interested in men—his brief character-sketches are admirable—he is interested in institutions, and he summarises a complex economic development with real skill. What he does not seek to establish is a canon for the period—a philosophic criterion by which its general character may be estimated. He is not, indeed, afraid to make judgments. Broadly, he writes from the angle of a Liberal of the Left, and, from that angle, his analysis of the controversial issues with which he has to deal are always fair and solidly founded. But he has not brought on to any single plane the vast narrative he has constructed. It is now clear, for instance, that the movement towards a coalition government sponsored by Mr. Lloyd George during the Home Rule controversy pointed to much deeper things than appeared obvious at the time. So, also, the support of the South African War by the leaders of the Fabian Society has its bearing upon the inability of the Labour Party to-day squarely to meet the issue of imperialism. The failure of Mr. Gladstone to interest himself in local government reform was unfortunate; but it was not, I think, half so serious as Mr. Asquith's inability to see the significance of the industrial upheavals of 1911–12. Mr. Ensor comments with skill on such social theories as those of T. H. Green and the Fabians. But he has nothing to say of F. W. Maitland, not only, perhaps, the greatest English historian since Gibbon, but, also, the most significant political theorist of his generation. It is a pity, too, that his analysis of colonial and foreign policy takes no account of what men like Mr. J. A. Hobson and Mr. H. N. Brailsford were writing in these years; the prophetic character of their analysis assumes now an importance far greater than the attention it received at the time.

This absence of a central clue is the more regrettable because so much of the material collected by Mr. Ensor in his economic chapters points towards conclusions one would have liked to see judged in its light. The nepotism of British industrial leadership, the absence of outstanding British inventions in this period, the connection of this with the inadequate standards of technical education in the period, upon all of these, in their inter-relationships there are possibilities which Mr. Ensor hardly develops. So, also, it would have been interesting if he had shown the significance of the growing literature of scepticism after 1900 in the contest of the international malaise and its repercussions. One would have liked to know how far Mr. Ensor sees in the constitutional crises he has to record the faint precursors of that deeper issue which is bound to occur unless political parties can discover, as they discovered between 1832 and 1914, a unified approach to social questions. Mr. Ensor, in a word, gives us a narrative from which the essential background is lacking. He is clear and revealing so far as he goes; but he seems to shrink from the task of explaining what he has to narrate.

On the other hand, it is difficult not to be enthusiastic over the admirable justice Mr. Ensor has rendered to the personal interplay of the political drama in these years. On Gladstone and Disraeli, on Salisbury and Balfour, on Asquith and Chamberlain and Lansdowne, he writes with a precision of insight which is remarkable. It is good to have justice done to Sir Robert Morant; and it is comforting that Mr. Ensor can write of royal personages without that distressing genuflexion which is now so fashionable. It shows how fully Mr. Ensor has read his sources that he can remind us (of what most people have now forgotten) of the asperity with which Lord Hugh Cecil criticised the late King over his relation to the Parliament Act. On the constitutional side, generally, Mr. Ensor writes with a balanced judgment about which there can be no praise too high. What one wishes here is that he would have told us his view of that complete lack of restraint shown by the Unionist leaders over the Budget of 1909 and the Home Rule Bill. Does he think it exaggeration to say that Toryism in these years was prepared to violate the unstated premisses of our parliamentary system to defeat those proposals? If he does, what is the inference he draws therefrom? All the way through his book, indeed, one feels inclined to ask Mr. Ensor what judgment he makes upon the situation he so carefully describes.

Perhaps he would reply that judgment is not his business. But the historian is compelled to select; and the very fact of selection implies a judgment of itself. Mr. Ensor would not, I think, claim that his history was devoid of colour and personality. I wish only that he had told us what were the reasons which led him to the particular colour and personality he has woven into the

It is writ on Desert Sands . . .

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narrative. His work is at every point solid; I feel it could have been far more illuminating if that solidity was flanked by a coherent philosophy. But this does not mean that his book is not fascinating. It deserves the widest possible audience for the high qualities it reveals on every page. H. J. LASKI

HAVELOCK ELLIS'S OBITER DICTA

Questions of Our Day. By HAVELOCK ELLIS. *Lane.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Havelock Ellis is in danger of canonisation. Only forty-five years ago reviewers were trying to hound him out of literary existence:—"A more foolish unwholesome perverted piece of sentimental cant we have never wasted our time over," said *The World*, in a review of *The New Spirit*, his first book, while the *Spectator* could not "imagine anything of which it could be more necessary for human nature to purge itself than *The New Spirit* of Havelock Ellis." Times have changed, and the outrageous immoralities of a generation which looked upon Van Gogh's pictures as the "painting of a madman" and Ellis, who was one of the first to appreciate them, as a moral decadent, has been succeeded by one which, on the look out for platitude like a terrier at a rat hole, accepts the paintings of the former and the writings of the latter as merely different variations on the theme of the obvious. It is a little hard. Men like Shaw, Wells and Ellis have been the mental opticians of an age. Looking at the world through spectacles which these men have tinted for them, the present generation is apt to see everything in their colours and to dismiss as platitudes what their fathers denounced as heresies. It is, indeed, the Nemesis which waits upon those who tell the truth for the first time, that after a time we should think we have always known what they told us. We have the grace sometimes to canonise the announcer, but in the literary, no less than in the Christian, world it is only the safe men who become canons, and a decline in influence only too often accompanies a rise in eminence.

These observations are naturally suggested by a consideration of Havelock Ellis's latest book, coupled with the reception of his recently published *My Confessional*.

The present book consists of a hundred short pieces, each of about eight hundred words in length. Too long for aphorisms, too short for essays, they belong, so far as their form is concerned, to the category of what the popular press knows as "leaderettes." The occasion of their writing is in the majority of cases the receipt of a letter from an enquirer to which the piece is written in answer. Thus the first one begins: "'I am a young man of twenty-one, intensely interested in the enigma of human betterment. . . . What is the end to strive for? It seems to me that the answer is Happiness. If you agree with me, what do you mean by Happiness, and how do you go about attaining it?'" The bulk of the questions asked relate to sex. "Only one marriage in four," writes a correspondent, "may be judged as even tolerably successful." What, then, Ellis is asked, is the recipe for happiness in marriage, or is there no recipe? Is there a substitute for war? Can leisure be put to a reasonable use—"there is nothing but the 'pictures' and death," begins a disgruntled young man? Is it possible to love one's neighbour as oneself, a question leading to some shrewd observations on what is called the new education? Is there something *really* peculiar about the young people of this generation, who, we are told, tend to regard their parents as "children," or are the parents who think that there is merely voicing a sophisticated form of the middle-aged's typical confession of inability to understand what the world is coming to? Should girls be taught dissection as part of biology? As he ranges from subject to subject, it is by the enormous scope of the book, and, by consequence, of the versatility of a writer who can take sex and education, marriage and the cinema, art and cookery, philosophy and euthanasia, mob hysteria and the inferiority complex, Keyserling and kissing among the Japanese in his stride, that the reader is chiefly impressed.

On all these subjects Havelock Ellis writes with wisdom and charm. He is never heavy-handed, never didactic, never boring; there is, I fancy, no living writer who, in the strict sense of the word, is so pre-eminently "readable." Like most of the great stylists, he gives the impression that to write is the easiest thing in the world. You have only, it seems, to put pen to paper and good style naturally results. It is partly, I suspect, the effect of this easy, natural manner of writing that enables Havelock Ellis to give the impression that, whatever his subject, he is sufficiently the master of it to afford to be at play with it. Yet as one reads these mellow, melodious pages, it is impossible to avoid asking oneself what has become of the rebel of thirty years ago. When such a variety of subjects is treated, it is no doubt unreasonable to expect distinctive doctrines to appear. But Havelock Ellis is a great man, a pioneer and prophet to the generation now coming to middle age, and one has a right to look to him for some word of light and leading in these difficult times. Light there may be—the diffused mellow light shed by the vision of a very old man, who has climbed to a position above the melée, and looks down upon mankind and its struggles with the kindly interest of an entomologist regarding an ant heap.

> Suave, mari magno turbantibus aequora ventis,
> E terra magnum alterius spectare laborem. . . .

Inevitably as one reads this latest volume, one is reminded of the opening of Lucretius's poem. But as to leading. . . . ! The familiar Ellis doctrines are restated. People are very mixed, and what is one man's meat is another man's poison. Therefore, you cannot lay down rules for other people. Life, in fact, is an art, an art that one must practise for oneself, and cannot learn from others. (The real trouble, of course, is that one has to give public performances while one is still learning.) The exercise of authority, therefore, is at best a nuisance, at worst an outrage. We must not, however, encourage the publication of such a work as *The Brown Book* of the Hitler terror, for fear of arousing in others the emotions we deplore in the Nazis. No metaphysical doctrine should command belief, for there are no absolute truths. The golden rule, in fact, in thought as in conduct, is that there is no golden rule. So much we have known these many years. We learnt it first from Montaigne, an author to whom Havelock Ellis frequently refers, and Ellis has himself since retaught it. But in this latest book he has added little to his teaching. C. E. M. JOAD

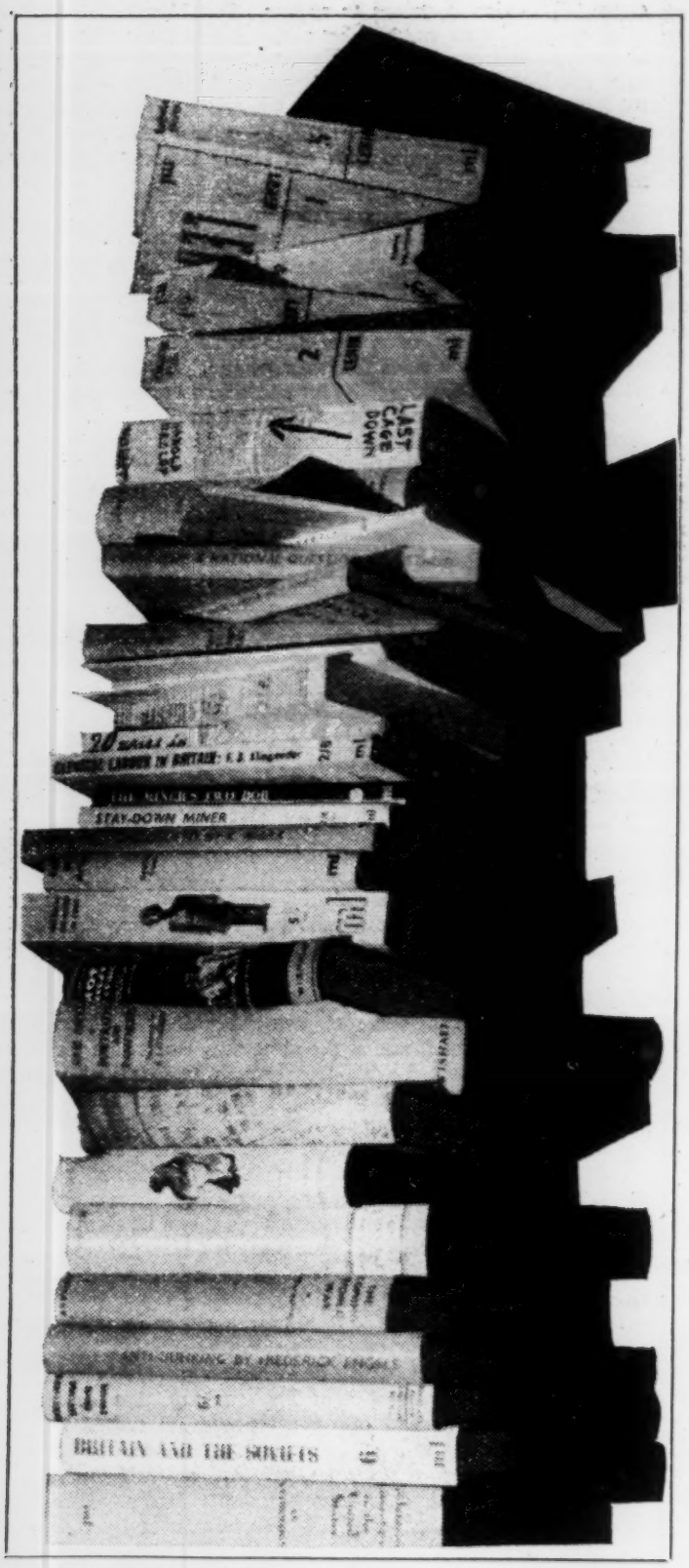
CHINA

My Country and My People. By LIN YUTANG. With an introduction by PEARL S. BUCK. *Heinemann.* 15*s.*

From several points of view *My Country and My People*, Mr. Lin Yutang's contribution to the study of China and the Chinese temperament, is a remarkable and interesting book. For one thing, if we discount a certain naivety and redundancy, due to the fact that the author is employing a foreign language, it is unusually well written. Secondly, although Mr. Lin Yutang has been educated in Europe, the attitude he adopts is neither the defensive-aggressive nor the mystic-apologetic; he does not kotow to Western "civilisation" and at the same time assert that the West is responsible for all the ills from which China is at present suffering, nor does he strike a pose on that singularly shaky pedestal—the superior wisdom of the ancient Orient. Mr. Lin Yutang is an uncommonly sensible man. He has a deep love for his own country and a warm admiration for the sterling qualities of his own people; but his feeling for Chinese virtues does not blind him to the existence of Chinese vices; and he would be the first to admit that the vices and virtues of the Chinese temperament are so closely connected that it is often quite impossible to draw an exact dividing line.

In many respects the Chinese bear a closer resemblance to the French than to any other European nation. Whereas the Japanese character includes distinctly Teutonic elements—worship of authority, sentimentality, timidity that sometimes turns to brutality, a fund of exalted patriotism united to considerable political ruthlessness—the Chinese are realists and opportunists, with a realistic appreciation of such unchanging factors in human affairs as money and the family. Like their French counterparts, educated Chinese have strongly developed family feelings, but are apt to decide that, if benevolence begins, it should also end, at home. The family is an exclusive and self-centred social organism; and much of the chaos of modern China has been caused by the Chinese inability to see beyond the family's limits, and by the tendency of every political situation to resolve itself, sooner or later, into a complicated and embittered game of family life.

These traits are dealt with, mildly yet unsparingly, by Mr. Lin Yutang in the illuminating section that he devotes to *The Chinese Character*. He breaks up its various components as follows—Mellowness, Patience, Indifference, Old Roguery, Pacifism, Contentment, Humour and Conservatism; and the most superficial acquaintance with the Chinese scene will provide vivid illustrations of every quality that Mr. Lin Yutang has included in his list.



The only literary monthly based on co-operation between workers and intellectuals, the LEFT REVIEW has, with the April number, been entirely re-dressed. Under the control of Edgell Rickword, the Editorial Board has been greatly strengthened to cover THE THEATRE, THE CINEMA and THE ARTS. It retains and deepens its connection with worker writers. Of course, its cartoons are notorious. (*6d.*)

A marriage

and will take place on March 16th, 1936, between Martin Lawrence, Ltd., and Wishart Books, Ltd. The union will be known as Lawrence & Wishart, Ltd. Both the honeymoon and the future will be spent at 2 Parton Street, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1.

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Our first list? Well, naturally we start with Lenin. We start with Lenin because his influence on the way of your life has already been greater than that of any other human being who has been a part of the modern world. When 170,000,000 people decide to abide by his teachings, the whole world is, in one way or another, influenced by those people. In the years to come it is almost certain that what he had to say will concern you even more intimately than at present. Not such a bad idea, then, to discover what he did say. Agreed? Lenin, however, was a prolific writer and the thirty volumes of his works—not all of which are at present available in English—are obviously too much for most of us. We have therefore arranged to publish a selection from his works in twelve volumes at only five shillings each. This is a new selection and one which the experts consider adequate for the average man's library. Time and experience alone have shown what part of his writings are now the essentials; and the fact that neither time nor experience are at the bidding of any publisher is our excuse for this new selection. We might add, don't you think, that the greater part of this new selection has never been available in English before. And you get about 400 pages for your five shillings. Two a month, we're issuing. Why not get the first two from your bookseller? From our point of view that'd be fine, for you're almost certain to go on buying them monthly.

One thing we can and do state with no fear of contradiction from any quarter. They will be the most important Left Wing publications of the next six months. They, with our Marxist books, are the foundations of modern socialist thought and until you have read them you can certainly not judge the quality of any other books, however they may be issued. Please make a note of that.

Here follows a list of some other books.

SPRING LIST

LENIN'S SELECTED WORKS (12 volumes, 5s. a volume). (See left column.) Publication begins in April.

DIALECTICS: THE LOGIC OF MARXISM AND ITS CRITICS. *T. A. Jackson.* 10s. 6d. (April).
Comparable, in its sphere, with Dutt's *Fascism and Social Revolution*.

BRITAIN WITHOUT CAPITALISTS. Possibilities of Socialist industry in Britain. By a group of experts, with an Introduction on Planning. 8s. 6d. (May).
A realist account of how industry is run now—and how it *could* be run to-morrow.

REVOLT ON THE CLYDE. *William Gallacher, M.P.* 10s. 6d. (end April).
Autobiography of the Communist M.P.—how "dilution" was fought in the last war.

EASTER, 1916. *Montagu Slater.* With an Introduction by Ellen Wilkinson, M.P. 2s. 6d. (April).
This play from the Left Theatre production comes appositely on the twentieth anniversary of Connolly's execution. We are also publishing *Easter Week*, an historical booklet by Brian O'Neill (1s., April), and handling editions of Connolly's works.

FRANCE (title to be decided later). *Ralph Fox.* 5s.
Immediately after French elections. An explanation of the social background, policies and successes of the *Front Populaire*.

A BASIS FOR THE THEORY OF MEDICINE. By *A. W. Speransky* (Director of the Department of Patho-Physiology of the All-Union Institute of Experimental Medicine, Moscow). 25s.

TOM MANN: An Appreciation on his 80th birthday. *Dora Torr.* 6d. (April).

DAWN OVER SAMARKAND. *Joshua Kunitz.* 8s. 6d.
The other side of the N.W. Frontier.

CHINA'S RED ARMY MARCHES. *Agnes Smedley.* 5s.
The "Ten Days" of the Chinese Soviets.

Three novels:—MAY DAY, *John Sommerfield;* THE COOLIE, *A. M. Anard;* MAN CHANGES HIS SKIN, *Bruno Jasilnski.* Each 7s. 6d. (end April). A book of Verse, POEMS OF STRIFE, *Julius Lipton*, with an Introduction by C. Day Lewis, 3s. 6d. (April); and of Cartoons, THEY FOLLOW THEIR LEADER, 3s. 6d. (May).

NEW MEN—NEW TIMES. By *Stalin* and *Stakhanovites* (Martin Lawrence, 5s.).

Recently published:—

BRITAIN AND THE SOVIETS. Verbatim report of the Congress of Peace and Friendship with the U.S.S.R. *Bernard Shaw, Sidney Webb, R. Boothby, M.P., etc., etc.* 6s.

MARXISM AND THE NATIONAL AND COLONIAL QUESTION. *J. Stalin.* 5s.

POVERTY OF PHILOSOPHY. *K. Marx.* 5s.

PROLETARIAN LITERATURE IN THE UNITED STATES: An Anthology. 7s. 6d.

AMERICAN WRITERS' CONGRESS. 6s.
Did you see the brilliant leader in *The Times Literary Supplement* on these two? We are reprinting this with permission, with an additional section on British social writers.

LETTERS FROM PRISON. *Georgi Dimitroff.* (6s. and 2s. 6d.) With Victor Gollancz.

MILITARISM AND FASCISM IN JAPAN. (Cheap Edition.) 5s.

STAY DOWN MINER. *Montagu Slater.* 2s. 6d.

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What, for example, could be mellower than the appearance of an elderly silver-bearded Chinese, placidly smiling as he sucks his tasselled pipe on the threshold of shop or restaurant some torrid summer evening, while the water-barrow squeaks by along the street? Yet good humour and good manners are balanced by an indifference to human suffering that seems to embrace the whole world, with the exception of the little world behind the gates of the family house; and the same Chinese city that affords so many proofs of philosophic good-nature teems with evidence of misery and poverty—rickshaw coolies whose only possessions are a thin cotton coat, faded blue drawers and a rag to wipe away the sweat; hideous beggars and cripples; labourers and carters as gaunt, wretched and unkempt as the struggling beasts of burden they thwack and curse.

In the light of history, however, this indifference, antipathetic though it may be, is not hard to understand. While, among European races, history is usually an incentive to action, among the Chinese it is an incentive to inaction; for they have learned that history is a circular movement and that the same moment perpetually returns, growth being followed by decline, triumph by disaster, order by confusion; with the result that a period of chaos, such as the present, is easily explained and calmly endured. A similar stoicism is reserved for the trials, torments and vicissitudes of individual life. Make yourself small, advised the sage, that disaster may sweep over you and leave you untouched!

> There is no more significant contrast (writes Mr. Lin Yutang) than that between the parting instruction of Tom Brown's mother in the English classic . . . to "hold his head high and answer straight" and the traditional parting instruction of the Chinese mother that her son should "not meddle with public affairs." . . . The Chinese people take to indifference as Englishmen take to umbrellas, because the political weather always looks a little threatening for the individual who ventures a little too far out alone. In other words, indifference has a distinct "survival-value" in China. Chinese youths are as public-spirited as foreign youths. . . . But somewhere between their twenty-fifth and their thirtieth years, they all become wise . . . and acquire this indifference which contributes a lot to their mellowness and culture.

Chinese indifference is based partly on the traditional lessons of history, partly on the pervasive influence of Taoist thought (itself a derivation of the historical process) with its celebration of the modest, the unelaborate, the small, the unassuming, the incomplete.

It is one of the chief merits of *My Country and My People* that it should provoke discussion; and, within the compass of a brief review, I cannot attempt to follow the numerous and fascinating trains of thought that are opened up on almost every page. Not all Mr. Lin Yutang's chapters are equally rewarding; but none are dull; and, although his criticisms of art and literature are less interesting than his analysis of social and political cause and effect, he never descends to journalistic commonplace. Here, in fact, is a book designed for the general reader, which is probably the best popular book of its kind that has yet been produced. It is lively, readable and—a very rare thing among books written by modern Orientals—in parts exceedingly amusing. The cross-references to Western life are unusually apt; and Mr. Lin Yutang's knowledge of Europe and European habits of thought gives his work a perspective and balance that he might otherwise have not been able to achieve.

PETER QUENNELL

FREUD FOR PARENTS

Wayward Youth. By AUGUST AICHHORN. *Putman.* 10s. 6d.

Those who, not unnaturally, have been dissuaded from studying the New Psychology by reason of its unfortunate and deceptive jargon, will find this book by a distinguished psychoanalyst interesting and enlightening; though here and there they will encounter those old friends, the Oedipus complex, the Reality principle and the Ego-ideal. Still, used as they are in this volume in minimal doses, the terms no longer seem silly and do not disturb us.

Dr. Freud, in a foreword, says that the author worked for many years in an official position as a director of state institutions for the care of delinquents before he became acquainted with psychoanalysis; and then adds these significant and sensible words: "Aichhorn's treatment of his charges had its source in a warm sympathy for the fate of these unfortunates and was rightly guided by his intuitive understanding of their psychic needs. Psychoanalysis could teach him little that was new to him in a practical way, but it offered him a clear theoretical insight into the justification of his treatment and enabled him to explain his method to others in this field." Later, Freud points out—one would imagine to the confusion of some of his disciples—that "educational work is *sui generis*, not to be confused with or exchanged for psychoanalytical means of influence. Psychoanalysis of the child is not an appropriate substitute for education."

Dr. Aichhorn was one of the originators of the supplementary day-schools in Vienna, known as the Hort. After the war, he became the director of an institution for children who showed a tendency to become delinquents. Later, owing to political developments, he ceased to have official connection with Vienna's welfare work; but he is still actively engaged in the work of a child-guidance clinic established by the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society. He possessed an "intimate knowledge of Viennese life, its fine social distinctions, and its many dialects, an ability to identify himself with people in all kinds of difficulties, and great personal charm," enabling him "to make immediate contact with all sorts and classes of people. Fat, jolly and comfortable-looking, he is a well-known and greatly beloved figure in Vienna." Is it unreasonable to infer that in these personal qualities, rather than in abstract Freudian doctrine, lies the secret of Dr. Aichhorn's undoubted understanding of and influence over the delinquent youths whom he approaches in so unconventionally human a manner?

It is, of course, true that familiarity with the more recent discoveries of psychologists assists in the formulation of a precise diagnosis, and may throw a valuable light on conduct problems. A situation becomes clear to the educator only when he knows the dynamic forces that produced it: his task being "to bring into consciousness those unconscious procedures which determine the behaviour; for neither the delinquent nor the neurotic individual has any conscious realisation of the relation between his behaviour and its deeper causation. . . . Psychoanalysis enables the worker to recognise dissocial manifestations as the result of an interplay of psychic forces, to discover the unconscious motives of such behaviour, and to find a means of leading the dissocial youth back to social conformity. . . . Without the discovery of the deep underlying causes of delinquency, any cure is accidental." But the author himself reminds us that "remedial education accomplished many good results before we had any psychoanalytic insight"; and, he adds, "educational work is an art, in which intuition is of primary importance. . . . The educator often over-values the significance of psychology for remedial training. For well-rounded work he must take into consideration many other factors, psychiatric, sociological, economic and cultural."

Since he became an enthusiastic apostle of psychoanalysis, Dr. Aichhorn has continued to exercise his old power with the same success as before; but he is sometimes inclined to find strange and (to less convinced Freudians) even ludicrous explanations of his success. An entertaining example is afforded by the story of the boy who, having revenged himself on someone who, as he thought, had insulted him, by defecating outside his "enemy's" door, was cured by being set to work in the vegetable garden "where he could work with fertilisers and dig in the earth." Another story is that of the seventeen-year-old youth with homosexual tendencies who, the author tells us, was cured by being put to work in the tailor shop, "because we assumed that the making of man's clothes could serve as a sublimation for his homosexual cravings." When the institution broke up, with the Austrian revolution, this young man "got employment in a big tailoring establishment and continued to do well." I suggest that a regular job and Dr. Aichhorn's personality and common sense had far more to do with the recovery of these youths than had any conscious application of psychoanalytic theory.

As to the causation of juvenile delinquency, the author found that the cases in the institution he controlled came, almost without exception, from families where the home situation was disturbed, broken up, or disharmonious, regardless of the deeper underlying causes of their delinquency. "It seems as if the shocks which the individual receives from society are endurable only when he finds a haven, which in our society the family normally offers. Given such a haven, the expressions of his instincts are held within bounds acceptable to society. When this is lacking, the equilibrium of these unstable individuals is all the more easily thrown out of balance."

Very interesting and instructive is the account of the Training School for which Dr. Aichhorn was primarily responsible, and of the endeavour to create a material and social environment providing the affection, understanding and "comfort" of which these children had little previous experience. "Many remained

for a long time astonished, distrustful and incredulous. The roughest, who heretofore had submitted only to force, looked on us as weaklings who dared not risk interfering with them. The intelligent looked down on us as stupid people who let ourselves be taken in." But, in the end, the environment proved its educative value in nearly all cases. The basic idea was not to restrain the youth from committing unsocial acts by force, in the hope of breaking a bad habit, but so to bring him into relation with reality, human and material, as to fit him for ordinary life in the community—not in an institution.

Yet, evil as he thinks brutality and severity towards children to be, Dr. Aichhorn has no sympathy with the notion that the best education is that which lets a child do as he likes; and even the bestowal of affection can, he thinks, easily be overdone—if no renunciation by way of return be asked for.

Wayward Youth is simply written, technical expressions being avoided as much as possible; and has been excellently translated.

HARRY ROBERTS

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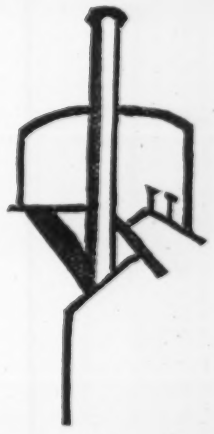

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Head Office. By HUGH PRESTON. *Hutchinson.* 7s. 6d.
Friendly Relations. By AUDREY LUCAS. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
The Croatian Shirt. By T. S. MARLE. *Barker.* 7s. 6d.
Sweet Racket. By JOHN GLOAG. *Cassell.* 7s. 6d.
The Darkling Plain. By HAROLD FORD ROSSETTI. *Constable.* 7s. 6d.

To help publishers, authors, etc., I have reverted to the starring system for novels, as it seems the simplest method of classification. One star means "recommended," a novel above the average for the week, two stars means "highly recommended," or one of the best novels of the month, and three stars means a quite exceptional novel, one that does something to hold up for a moment the endless landslide towards mediocrity in what was once the art of Flaubert and of Henry James. No stars are given unless books are readable, that is to say unless they possess what is called narrative power, or, in the case of pictorial novels without a plot, some inducement to make the reader turn over the next page. Before we attack the novels for this week, I should like to mention two novels which I have been accused of being unfair to; both have since been praised to me by discriminating writers. One is *Diary from a Dustbin*, by H. B. Cresswell, and the other *Follow Thy Fair Sun*, by Viola Meynell. Somebody also thought that because I wrote that *A Handful of Dust* was the first novel of Evelyn Waugh's in which the hero was a bore, that I meant that the book was a bore. Actually I have just re-read it, in the feverish way in which one reads a book one enjoys when one should be doing something else, and found it to improve on re-reading. I think it is far the best thing he has done and one of the three or four outstanding novels of the last two years. Just as the A.A. chose the Lion at Guildford to be the typical representative, the archetype, of the three-star hotel, so I choose *A Handful of Dust* to be my yardstick for the three-star novel.

***Men and Brethren* describes twenty-four hours in the life of a New York clergyman. He is an Episcopalian, the equivalent of our Church of England clergyman. He does not agree with Methodists, Buchmanites, Anglo-Catholics and Roman Catholics. His religion seems practical and prosaic beside theirs, but we see him doing more good and doing it more quickly and more sensibly than any of the other denominational leaders in the parish, and also finding time, in the hot summer day, to brush up his doctrine. His work lies among a variety of people, fashionable women, a wild young high-brow poet, an Anglo-Catholic "brother," who leaves his monastery on a "grave charge"; nothing could be less like the existence in an English rectory, and all is related in a direct, intelligent, purposeful style.

> Ernest said, "The purpose of marriage is the propagation of children and the subsequent rearing of them in a Christian home. When that isn't the result, it has no purpose, and having no purpose is likely to become irksome and futile. I see no reason why you should continue to live with Lee, if you don't want to live with him. But you'd miss him. You've lived with him for ten years. That's the most important thing. Perhaps you didn't like it all, but a person, in your position, at least, wouldn't continue for ten years anything that was really unendurable. Consequently I don't think there's any sense in divorcing him." He filled the glass of vermouth and broken ice with soda and pushed it over to her. "That's all I have to say, my dear. I can't give you advice of any value or interest to you, because we don't regard the same things as valuable or interesting."

This will give you some idea of the kind of hero Mr. Cozzens has chosen and the way in which the book is written. It is altogether vivid, exciting and unusual, and makes, as a novel, a deep impression on one.

**Head Office* is another one-day-one-book affair. For a first novel it is brilliant—the picture of a day in a big London office seen through the eyes of half-a-dozen people. It succeeds because there are not too many characters, they are skilfully chosen, and admirably rendered as the conventional clerks, typists, and managing directors that they are—or they wouldn't be there—yet all are, in their own way, original and human. There is plenty of drama in the office, and the day ends up with a marriage and a murder—it is in that respect like *Grand Hotel*, than which it is a more genuine book, because the author has a more genuine sense of values. He does not often say so, but he makes it very plain that much is wrong with a system under which half the population spend all the daylight sitting in a room, on a chair, and worrying about their future. Mr. Preston also worries about his future.

> The vexed question of aeroplane *versus* battleship was being argued everywhere. Titbits of horrible knowledge concerning poison gases and incendiary bombs . . . were tickling the imagination of millions all over the world. . . . Far more interesting than reading about some obscure discovery in the cure of cancer, or a new plan for relieving unemployment. Why was it? Why is the fire fascinating even to the child who has been burnt?

**Friendly Relations* is a delightful novel, less realist and more of a comedy than *Head Office*, but also satisfying, because it paints a clear picture of middle-class business men and their wives and children. To several prosperous brothers and sisters returns the long-lost elder brother from India. Thinking he is a millionaire they alter their behaviour accordingly and are finally taught a lesson. This central theme of the book allows for a good deal of discerning satire, as in Compton Mackenzie's *Poor Relations*. The love-affair between one of the nephews and a girl called Brenda, a creature of the uneasy *demi-monde* of Fulham, is in a different vein, seldom has that familiar female type, a mixture of respectability, pose, cupidity, and passion, been so well-analysed nor her sad and oft-recurring predicament been so accurately described. But it's a gay, light, Sunday afternoon novel all the same.

The Croatian Shirt is the only talkie-novel for the week. This is the beginning:

> In December that year the weather was very cold. On the Sunday more snow came, and although it did not lie in the city, the hills outside Vienna were white. They stood out sharply in the late afternoon against a grey sky that meant more snow, and the trees were black against the white of the hills. The evenings were grey, and it got colder than ever at night. . . . I walked through the Hofburg and down towards the Opera. Opposite the statue of Mozart I crossed the road and went into the bar of the hotel.

Now I wonder what that reminds us of? I showed it to my friend Spud Crout, author of *Heels*, *Punks* and *They've a Name for That in the Navy*, who writes "I've sent that book straight down to my agents for the boys to find out if I wrote it. And if not, get this: the guy that did is going to get the way he's got to get what he's going to get. Get that!"

Otherwise, except for one excruciating sentence ("Let's get all

Hitler's Coup
has given this book extraordinary topicality and significance

The Twilight of Treaties
by Y. M. GOBLET

Published quietly a week ago, this book has suddenly become extraordinarily apt. In it an eminent French geographer, a learned and very original thinker, studies the growing disrespect for treaties.

J. L. GARVIN: "It is **an excellent contribution** to a subject which, one way or another in the next two years, will probably make the whole difference to the world."

TIMES: "entrancing study . . . it is no mean feat that within the space of 270 pages he should have been able to survey pretty well the whole of the modern world; his wide range of study is evident in every chapter . . . it is stimulating to have the views of so learned and untrammelled a thinker and geographer as M. Goblet **at a time when revision of treaties is being so hotly debated.**"

JUST OUT *7/6 net* **BELL**

religious. Did I ever tell you that I had an ancestor who was a Cardinal complete with hat and all.") *The Croatian Shirt* is a very readable, pleasant, and exciting thriller with a charming central European background. The Bar of the Bristol Hotel, Prague, Zagreb, Buda-Pest all bob up agreeably, and the descriptions of the fighting in Vienna are first rate. Excellent train-stuff. *Sweet Racket* is one of those plausible, but slightly too improbable and irritating novels about tough life in America which betray their English origin. The slang often seems not quite right, the English attitude to love, so different from the American, creeps in, and one gets that impression of a good fellow going slightly wrong all the time that one finds in the American books of Wodehouse and Linklater. However, I lent it to an American who thought it highly amusing.

The Darkling Plain is a first novel by a young author who can obviously write—but the material; three dull young men and their dull courtships—one can't manage it, and I foundered about page 200. Mr. Harold Ford Rossetti has wit, he is observant, admires E. M. Forster, preserves an arrogant Cambridge integrity among the inchoate unintelligent vastness of London, but he cannot dominate it. I give the first sentences to show how good he may one day be.

"New Zealand," said Mr. Almond, handing the small snapshot. Henry's head was throbbing as he took it. "Ah," he said. There were Mrs. Almond and her sister, dim; behind was a tree. . . . "Now this," said Mr. Almond, having passed by two or three as of insufficient merit, "is particularly interesting." Henry took it. "Along this road," said Mr. Almond, "our Lord must many times have walked."

CYRIL CONNOLLY

NEEDED—A CONSTITUTION

The League of Nations and the Rule of Law, 1918-1935.
By Sir ALFRED ZIMMERN. *Macmillan.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

A book by one of the most outstanding University teachers of the post-war period in the field of international relations can hardly fail to attract widespread attention. Sir Alfred has attempted the ambitious task of examining, from the angle of the political scientist, methods of co-operation between States and, in particular though not exclusively, the League of Nations, and their connection with the establishment of a Rule of Law in international relations. His method is, first, to survey in an introductory section, constituting rather less than a third of the book, the main elements of the system of international relations before the Great War; secondly, to describe the framing of the Covenant and trace in the completed text the various strands of ideas which had gone to its making; thirdly, to sketch the history of the fate of these ideas in the practice of the League down to 1935. Two final chapters discuss the methods of work of the Council, Assembly and Secretariat and the relations between the League and the Old Diplomacy.

The main thesis of the book is that the absence of a "constitution"—a term which is used interchangeably with "society" and "world-society" and left otherwise undefined—destroys the possibility of a Rule of Law. In the absence of a Rule of Law, the rules of international law are "little more than a decorous name for the convenience of Chancellories" to be observed or set aside at the will of any of the subjects of international law. The influence of international law in our time is ascribed to "adoration of the wig and gown" as "substitute-religions in legal trappings." This view is surely a little too sweeping.

Apart from the difficulty of the concept of a Rule of Law as precedent to the acceptance of rules of law, it underestimates the significance of the considerable body of rules of international law which have been patiently formed and continuously observed in the daily regulation of inter-state conduct. Few international lawyers to-day would maintain that the existing body of rules is adequate for contemporary conditions. But does Sir Alfred seriously contend that the non-existence of rules in many spheres of international conduct destroys the legal character of rules which have for decades and in more cases than the reader would be led to expect for centuries, regulated other spheres? The fact that "the peoples of the world know little of them" is an argument in favour of educational reform, not of a denial of their obligatory character. A great many citizens of every country are daily making pleasant and unpleasant discoveries about municipal rules of law to which they are undoubtedly subject.

The question really at issue concerns the degree of consciousness of community between the subjects of the international legal system necessary for ensuring political and economic security. The nature of the issue and the adequacy of the contribution made by existing methods of co-operation between states might have been clearer if some account had been given of "the stuff and substance of international politics" during the pre-war and the post-war period. But, apart from a few incidental references, Sir Alfred intentionally avoids this field. What, then, is to be the scope of the Rule of Law? Is it to be built upon the direct association of individual citizens with negotiated rules of international conduct? If so, how does it differ from that incipient world-government which is condemned as a vague dream of which "cobwebs still linger in some old-fashioned minds to-day"? If not, in what respects does it differ from the existing position?

The reader is thus left rocking in a rudderless boat, almost defenceless against the buffets of Sir Alfred's brilliant style and daring analogies.

A number of statements on more detailed points might also be criticised. The history of official negotiations for the allocation of wavelengths since 1929, for example, is very far from demonstrating that "it has not proved difficult since the war to convince people of the desirability and the urgency of uniformity." In another chapter Sir Alfred expresses himself as having been whole-heartedly in favour of "the knitting together of the Covenant and the Kellogg Pact." But while the attempted remodelling of the dispute articles of the Covenant is condemned, he gives no indication as to how "the knitting together" was to be achieved by any method, other than a remodelling, which would not have made nonsense of this section of the Covenant. Similarly, hints are dropped in a long footnote on disarmament that a regional approach on "Locarno lines" might have succeeded, and the Anglo-German naval agreement of 1935 is cited as a suggestive incident in this connection. A reading of the Agreement, however, makes it abundantly clear that its terms can only become a measure of limitation or reduction from the day it is incorporated in a general disarmament convention. The regional disarmament of States with world-wide interests is surely a chimaera.

There are nevertheless many interesting passages, particularly in the chapter which records Sir Alfred's own observations on the working of the main organs of the League. The description of the

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elements of the powers which the Secretariat may exercise is masterly. Indeed, at least one reader is left with an ungracious feeling of disappointment that Sir Alfred did not choose a more limited canvas and present students of international relations with a detailed study of the practice and procedure of the League.

S. H. BAILEY

THE PROSE OF LIFE

Arnold Bennett's Letters to his Nephew Richard Bennett. *Heinemann.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Some twelve years before he died Arnold Bennett undertook the financial obligation of educating his nephew. A correspondence between the two sprang up, and now the amusing spectacle of Arnold Bennett as the benefactor and mentor of the young may be observed in the letters his nephew has preserved. Arnold Bennett was always a thorough actor. He liked to see himself in many parts. (At Salzburg once he successfully pretended to his hosts that he ate no meals on dietetic principles.) When he became the liberal and wealthy uncle he obviously set out to enjoy all the delights and responsibilities of that gratifying rôle.

It is this obvious enjoyment of his situation which redeems these letters from their otherwise tedious content. With their perfunctory record of dinings and dancings, hobnobbings with politicians, train journeys and observations from the balconies of continental hotels, and their notes on the output of words per week and price per thousand, these letters, like so much of his published journalism, stick phlegmatically to the surface of people and events. They make hardly more than a Bradshaw of his life, dressed out with a certain amount of genial, shrewd or slangy commentary. But one gets in these letters what is missing from the portentously self-conscious diaries—a refreshing feeling that Bennett is laughing at himself; and also the embarrassing feeling that one is looking on at the life of a man who is tired out, dispirited in spite of his apparent zest, and indescribably lonely. "I think that anything is better than solitude," he writes. "Personally I always absolutely refuse to spend an evening alone." And, indeed, he seems never to have been alone or not working.

Mr. Swinnerton, in an interesting introduction, says that when Bennett was not obliged by his stammer to speak with emphasis he would relapse into an extraordinarily simple and gentle manner. The dullness of so much of Bennett's work seems to me to spring from a similar monotony of emphasis and his excellences to appear when this methodical emphasis breaks. In a recent anthology of prose describing the English in love it was surprising to see with what sensibility and faithfulness Bennett described the feelings and situations of ordinary people and how much better he did it than almost all his contemporaries. There was an impediment in the expression of his intimate feelings about himself. A dry, defensive humour or some picture of himself as a slightly comical man of the world, was left to mark the place where he might have been more intimate but could not bring himself to be so. In consequence amid all the glory in output, the innocent wonder at Lord Beaverbrook's extravagances, the strange preoccupations with prices, rents, punctuality, the cost of clothes, the behaviour of cars, etc., there is an undertone of puzzled weariness.

The book does not contain very many good stories and all Arnold Bennett's travel notes were poor. He obviously loathed foreigners like any other North-country Englishman. The Austrians were charming but slack. Reinhardt came late to lunch. And so on. His chief memory of Seville seems to have been of how much Lord Beaverbrook spent there. Beaverbrook's name appears often, and there is a charming story that Beaverbrook had written a novel about the life of Christ but confessed that he had had trouble with the dialogue. Even after he had tried imitating the dialogue of *The Old Wives Tale* he found he had no success.

V. S. PRITCHETT.

POETS AND PROPHETS

Poets and Prophets. By ANDRÉ MAUROIS. *Cassell.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

This is a volume of lectures, "designed for, and delivered to, a French audience," on some English literary men of to-day and yesterday: the choice being "confined to those who have offered to their contemporaries not only aesthetic enjoyment, but also a philosophy." ("Poets" and "philosophy" are evidently to be taken in a wide sense, since the one is made to include Shaw and Wells, and the other Conrad.) The obvious thing to say about the book as a whole is that English readers must not expect too much. M. Maurois's biographical sketches of Kipling, Chesterton, Lawrence, etc., his brief accounts of their work and—especially—thought are neat and useful—but we knew it before. He is admirable, and even disappointing, in his power of expounding a creed for pages together without comment; it is a lesson on the rare virtue of hearing people out, but it leaves one increasingly convinced that a literary prophet's views do not mean much, apart from his less definable aesthetic and moral qualities. How *can* one quote two whole pages from the last act of *Candida*, as M. Maurois does, simply to illustrate a theory of the author's, without letting out a word about what one thinks of the thing itself?

However, when M. Maurois does allow himself an aesthetic judgment, he is apt to strike the English reader as curiously naive. For instance, we learn that Kipling is a poet of the first order, against whom English criticism happens to be prejudiced—his verse being "certainly of a strangely rhythmic kind," which "fashion in England" looks askance at.

> But perhaps there are Kipling's "better" poems, just as some of Chopin's nocturnes are lovelier than others, or certain symphonies of Beethoven grander than the rest. These the English reader knows by heart, and the result is that he judges as commonplace things which are merely too familiar.

Beethoven!

M. Maurois, without any bones about it, regards Kipling as "the greatest writer of our time, and one of the greatest of any time"—but he hardly makes good the estimate; it is not really very weighty to point out that Kipling was a "myth-maker," and that French boys play at Mowgli. So was Conan Doyle a "myth-maker," and Sherlock Holmes far exceeds even Mowgli in ubiquity. On Kipling's "thought" M. Maurois is clear and good, and (though not at all hostile, even apparently sympathetic) makes it sound deplorable. On the other hand, Chesterton's gospel becomes much less exasperating in the hands of this friendly but reasonable exponent—which may be a way of repeating that M. Maurois either does not react to, or prefers not to notice, his subjects' subtler qualities, consequently, their work as a whole. Conrad is the simplest, but involves his critic in one rather French

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mistake: à propos of Captain MacWhirr's placid acceptance of the Siamese flag, M. Maurois says: "He [the captain] has the same horror for the highfalutin as Kipling's schoolboys have." The intellect proper, we are told, is concerned with discovering analogies—and the French intellect never shirks its work; but really there is *no* connection (unless you count antithesis) between Conrad's episode and *The Flag of Their Country*. The untheoretical Englishman in whom foreigners believe would not make such a blunder.

A happier analogy is M. Maurois's parallel between Shaw and Voltaire—Molière being wisely dismissed as irrelevant. There is a good deal in this pleasant hint.

One writer fits the method with unusual neatness—Aldous Huxley, of whom an admirable account is given. But there is one essay better yet, for different reasons, and M. Maurois has saved it up for a *bonne bouche*. On Katherine Mansfield he throws detachment to the winds. "Before the greatest art, which is also the simplest" he concludes, after a chapter of ardent appreciation, "silence is the only expression of delight"—and it must be said that, this time, his quotations beautifully support enthusiasm. But the passion for theory does not leave him, even here. It appears that Katherine Mansfield was the first writer in England to be *really* feminine; other literary women had been "interesting but hybrid"—half male, half female.

> When Emily Brontë's masterpiece reached its publishers, they believed it to be the work of a man. . . . *Mrs. Dalloway* is perhaps the only novel which Katherine Mansfield might possibly have written. But Virginia Woolf is a lover of ideas; she can beat men on their own ground; she is one of the best English critics of the day. Perhaps she does not give us so close a contact with the feminine soul.

This calm appropriation of all thought seems about as reasonable as to remark that Tolstoy is an interesting writer, but, of course, hybrid—half male, half female; he is a lover of ideas, and does not concern himself exclusively with—shall we say coal-heaving. And in any case—has M. Maurois never heard of Jane Austen? We are told (by Mr. F. L. Lucas) that she is more French than English *really*; in that case it seems hard that she should be so persistently cold-shouldered by her *real* countrymen.

The translation is not always careful, and the printing abominably careless. Here, for instance, is a good sentence:

> If a woman is hysterical, it is because she ought to follow to what picture of a woman as conceived by a man she ought to approximate.

Hear, hear!

K. JOHN

EMOTION PICTURES

Documentary Film. By PAUL ROTHA. *Faber.* 12*s.* 6*d.*
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The first of these two books summarises the past and present scope of the documentary film; the second forecasts a possible future development of the cinema in general. As the definition of film is surely "pictures that move and have meaning," it is clear that documentary has, of all films, the strongest claim to be regarded as pure cinema; for it presents facts, and is in no way concerned with fictions, other than those agile visual conceits which may serve to illumine the meaning of its facts. The process of film-making—direction and cutting—is an activity that hovers on the verge of art; but it is essentially selective, rather than creative. In no other form of film is this choice of what to shoot, and how to shoot it, reduced to such stark and practical terms as in documentary. Interpretation must naturally follow on this choice; but it is the vantage-point, not the point of view, that is here of primary importance.

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One cannot, even with documentary, put the cart before the horse: documentary is artistic reporting. And though in this case the "art" is merely the implication drawn from the facts—their juxtaposition by the director, and their interpretation—the facts, in documentary, must come first and speak for themselves. However, as we might expect from the critic-documentarian who made the best British film in this *genre* (*The Face of Britain*), the second part of his book, in which he assesses the past achievements of documentary, is wholly admirable. So, too, are the illustrations.

Mr. Bower, who has had wide experience of the film-trade, gives us in sixty pages a headlong, blustering and digressive account of what the movies have done so far, and, in another eighty, his conception of the solid, rather than stereoscopic, film of the future. His big bad wolf is *montage*—imperfectly understood, it seems—and his three little pigs: *The Front Page*, Wagner, and *The Dynasts* (which he shows to be a super-scenario almost ready-made). Unusually, Mr. Bower's destructive criticism is weak; his constructive faculties impressive. The addition of pictures is to broadcasting, he says, what the sudden gift of tongues was to the silent cinema. Before the arrival of sound, the cinema resembled a dumb man. It is still far from complete. With the perfection of colour-processes and the natural amalgamation of television and cinema, will come stereoscopy; shortly after that we may perhaps return to the original, circular theatre—the arena—to watch three-dimensional images thrown by four overlapping projectors on to a cylindrical screen in the centre. Ballet and opera will at last suit the pictures. All the arts in one!

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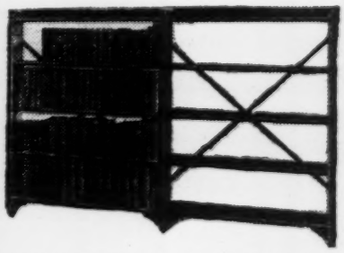

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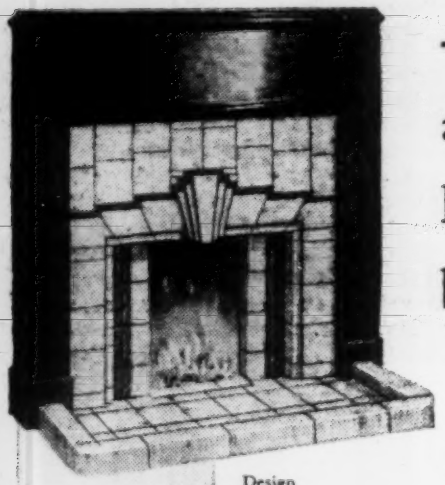

—but above all let it be beautiful

Design S. 397.

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871 AND ALL THAT

Alfred the Great. By F. H. HAYWARD. *Duckworth.* 2s.
King James I. By HUGH ROSS WILLIAMSON. *Duckworth.* 2s.
Livingstone. By D. C. SOMERVELL. *Duckworth.* 2s.

His latest biographer is certain that we do not care enough about England's Darling. But do we *know* enough about him to give him the stature of a Charlemagne? In 871 he became King and charged uphill to win the solitary victory of Ashdown. Seven years later he was able to impose terms of a temporary peace on the Danes. If dates were all, that would complete our accepted knowledge of the only English king to whom we allow the suffix of "the Great." But dates are not all, and we have Alfred's enlightened literary zeal, his invention of the candle-clock and the horn-lantern, his building of longships, and an attractive corpus of legends. It is true that Geoffrey of Monmouth transferred romantic homage from the Angles to the Celts, but Arthur is hardly likely to find a place in Messrs. Duckworth's series of "Great Lives," even though the biographies are printed at the Camelot Press. Where Mr. Hayward is relevant, he is readable. But even a hundred and fifty pages is made to seem too wide a compass for the fragmentary facts of Alfred's life and character, and the balance is made up of attacks upon an unimportant poem by Mr. Chesterton, of references to a previous subject of Mr. Hayward's pen, and of random exhibitions of racial irritation.

Mr. Williamson's biography of James I, on the other hand, seems to me a model of what such writing should be. It is boiled down rather than worked up, which is more than an inelegant way of saying that the subject is naturally far more fully documented than that with which Mr. Hayward deals. It is indeed so well documented (with just that inviting gap in the matter of the Gowrie Plot) as to attract the tendencious treatment that it has often received. But here the politician's interest in constitutional history and the novelist's interest in individual character leave no room for the romantic apologist. Again there are only a hundred and fifty pages for the royal master of Shakespeare, Jonson, Bacon, Raleigh, Donne, Inigo Jones and Guy Fawkes, but bounded in this nutshell James could count himself a king of infinite space, were it not that he has bad dreams of treason. Bandy-legged he straddles a narrow but immensely important period of English history. "Shambling untidily between the Virgin Queen and the Martyr King," as Mr. Williamson says on an opening page that ensures that his book shall be read, "he has the air of a grotesque in the pageant of English monarchs." But the word "grotesque" originally connoted something admirably lifelike, and in spite of his dribbling mouth, his childish vanity, his sudden cries of "Treason!" and those astonishing letters to his minions ("from your dear dad and husband") of which Mr. Williamson contrives to squeeze in one or two, James does emerge, not only as a credible, if effeminate, man, but as a king who, by short-sighted means, achieved long ends. The book has the pattern, almost the breadth, of a much fuller biography, and although the style is neat and often witty, it is only in a single reference (and that to Knox, perhaps a permissible butt) that the author uses the advantages of brevity for clever malice. An example of his careful sense of proportion is the space that he devotes to an examination of the contemporary witch-cult. There was room and necessity for this, but many might have sacrificed it for a facile sketch of the Renaissance background, which Mr. Williamson leaves severely to his readers' knowledge or imagination. One looks forward eagerly to the life of Buckingham which this incisive historical writer has in preparation.

Of Livingstone, a boyhood hero who is not easily dislodged from his pedestal by later and more critical reading, there can never be very much to say that is not already contained in the missionary's own accounts of his travels, upon which Mr. Somervell naturally draws very freely. But to suggest, as is here suggested, that because Livingstone was essentially a "good" man his character must not be touched by the mischievous fingers of psycho-analytical study is to dismiss at the outset one of the few reasons for writing a fresh life of him. The manifest absence of a skeleton is no good reason for keeping the cupboard door tightly closed, and Livingstone's sincere belief in "Commerce and Christianity," a belief which he implemented so magnificently, might have prompted a subtler analysis of his character than Mr. Somervell is disposed to give. The commendable features of this biography are the insistence on developments in Africa subsequent to, and in some degree consequent upon, the work of Livingstone, and the use which has been made of Kirk's private

diaries. The chief matter for regret is a method and arrangement which have a curiously deflating effect and rob the dramatic points of Livingstone's lonely career of most of their force. But the book may send many readers back to the *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambezi* and the *Last Journals*. That in itself is well worth a florin. FRANCIS WATSON

FOOTING THE BILL

War Finance and Its Consequences. By F. FAIRER SMITH. *Faber and Faber.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

To the folly and cowardice of our war finance, with its piling up of internal indebtedness and its gigantic profiteering inadequately checked by the excess profits tax, Mr. Fairer Smith imputes the chief responsibility for the productive waste of capital and labour which constitutes unemployment and depression. His detailed and well-documented story of the fumbling inconsistency which characterised our provision of the necessary money to pay war-costs makes somewhat heavy reading, but it will take its proper place as an expert exposure of the inability of our statesmen and financiers to bring clear thinking to bear upon a critical situation. His central charge is the failure to recognise that the wealth and the credit of the State stand behind the credits of the bankers and of the loan subscribers who found the enormous sums of money needed to pay the fighting forces and the munition makers. " If the Government had kept the lending of the additional money it created to itself—it could have charged for its use and at the same time have so controlled it as to keep prices from rising and scandalous fortunes from being made. That was its plain duty, but having no plan already devised, it was caught unawares and the rest of the public has been ever since heavily penalised for its lack of foresight, being made to pay for the use of its own money and also to facilitate the financing of those whose chief pre-occupation was to make as much as they could out of their country's dilemma." (p. 33). The notion of putting a large part of the financial burden of the war upon posterity by slowly liquidated war loans had no justification. The actual current costs of war could have been defrayed out of the incomes from the prices paid for the war-goods, either by a current conscription of wealth or afterwards by a capital levy. Interested cowardice rejected both these methods, with the consequence that the war shifted the distributions of incomes in favour of the wealthy few, denying the poorer classes the consuming power required to maintain the economic system in its full productivity. Post-war finance not only did nothing to remedy war-errors, but by its return to the gold standard and its redemption loans increased the real burden of indebtedness. Whereas ordinary business loans for investment bring into existence an operative productive capital, war-loans have no such effect. They pay for destruction and " constitute inflation of the worst possible kind, the creation of a lasting, terribly burdensome and purely redundant fund " (p. 290). Useful statistics indicate the maldistribution of wealth due to this war and post-war finance, and show how trivial is the share of war-loan held by the multitude of small investors, less than 8 per cent.! It is to be hoped that this searching examination will be studied by those who seem likely to be responsible for bringing this country into another war. J. A. HOBSON

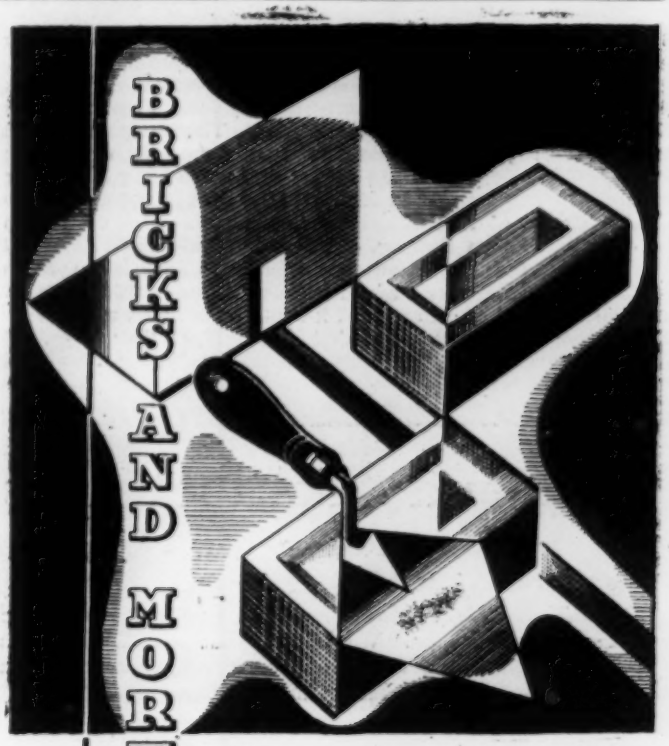
SHORTER NOTICES

History of Labor in the United States, 1896-1932. Vol. III. By DON D. LESCOHIER and ELIZABETH BRANDEIS; Vol. IV. By SELIG PERLMAN and PHILIP TAFT. *Macmillan.* 20*s.* and 17*s.* respectively.

These volumes take up the story that was begun in the first two, published a good many years ago. It is altogether a fine and scholarly piece of work, for which Professor John R. Commons can claim the lion's share of the praise. Professor Commons is, so to speak, the Sidney and Beatrice Webb of America; he was the principal author of the earlier volumes, and he has guided and inspired the writers of the last two. Professor Perlman and Dr. Taft trace the history of the struggle between capital and labour from the closing years of the nineteenth century through the war and post-war periods; and their presentation of events and their critical analysis are alike admirable. In Vol. III Prof. Lescohier deals more generally with working conditions and employers' policies —wages, hours, unemployment, scientific management, rationalisation, profit sharing and so on; while Dr. Brandeis and others give a valuable account of labour legislation in its various branches. Both volumes are well documented and both contain imposing bibliographies.

Britain and the Soviets. *Martin Lawrence.* 6*s.*

Last December a highly successful Congress of Peace and Friendship with the U.S.S.R. was held in London, and both those who attended it



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and many who did not will welcome this report of its proceedings. The lectures and discussions cover a wide field; the principal speakers, numbering two or three dozen, include M.P.'s and peers, Trade Unionists and Co-operators, business men, educationists, doctors, representatives of science, art, literature, drama and sport. Their purpose was not merely to sing the praises of Soviet Russia, though most of them did that; but to explain the problems with which it is faced and how it is solving them, the lessons that the rest of us can learn from it, and above all to plead the cause of Anglo-Russian amity and collaboration. On this last point Mr. Robert Boothby, Mr. Seymour Cocks, Lord Allen and Mr. A. G. Marshall are all eloquent and forceful. There is no space to give a list of all the lecturers who deal with special aspects of the subject, economic, political or cultural, and it would be invidious to single out one or another. The reader, whether or no he shares their views, will find they provide not only an immense variety of information but a real stimulus to thought.

Week-end Competitions

No. 313

Set by Moreton Marsh

Herr Hitler's "Mein Kampf" has been translated into Chinese and published in Nanking. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best extract from a Chinese review of this product of the Occident.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, March 20.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

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RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 311

Set by Tom Naisby

The maid, Sapphire, is not naturally truthful, not usually careful in her choice of words, and not scrupulously honest. She has merits, but they are offset by other failings. She holds over you knowledge of a certain episode which, whilst not entirely damning, would be embarrassing if divulged and particularly difficult to disprove. When your wife (or husband) gives her notice, she asks for a reference to support her application for a situation at the Rectory. The Rector is newly appointed, but he will certainly get to know you soon. Your testimonial should, therefore, hold warnings that must lie hidden until such time as it may become necessary to emphasise them in self-exculpation.

A First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second of Half a Guinea are offered for the most suitable testimonials. The complex circumstances demand fuller treatment than is usual, but no recommendation could reasonably run to more than 250 words.

Report by Tom Naisby

The response showed that I have not been wrong in my secret conviction that every normal household has its lesser infamies, and that many domestic servants have inclinations towards light blackmail. I intended it to be assumed that Sapphire had a strong desire to secure the new post. In addition, I had no doubt that, with her acknowledged primary defects, she would open and inspect the reference or in other ways assure herself that the "character" coincided with her own estimate. Though the competition was intended as an exercise in subtlety within these limits, I decided, when I read through the entries, that it would be unjust rigorously to insist on these conditions being fulfilled. Nevertheless, I felt compelled to frown on those competitors who decided that the main purpose was to set themselves right with the Rector in the matter of the "episode." A surprising number took this view. Among them, B. H. Homersham scored a hit:

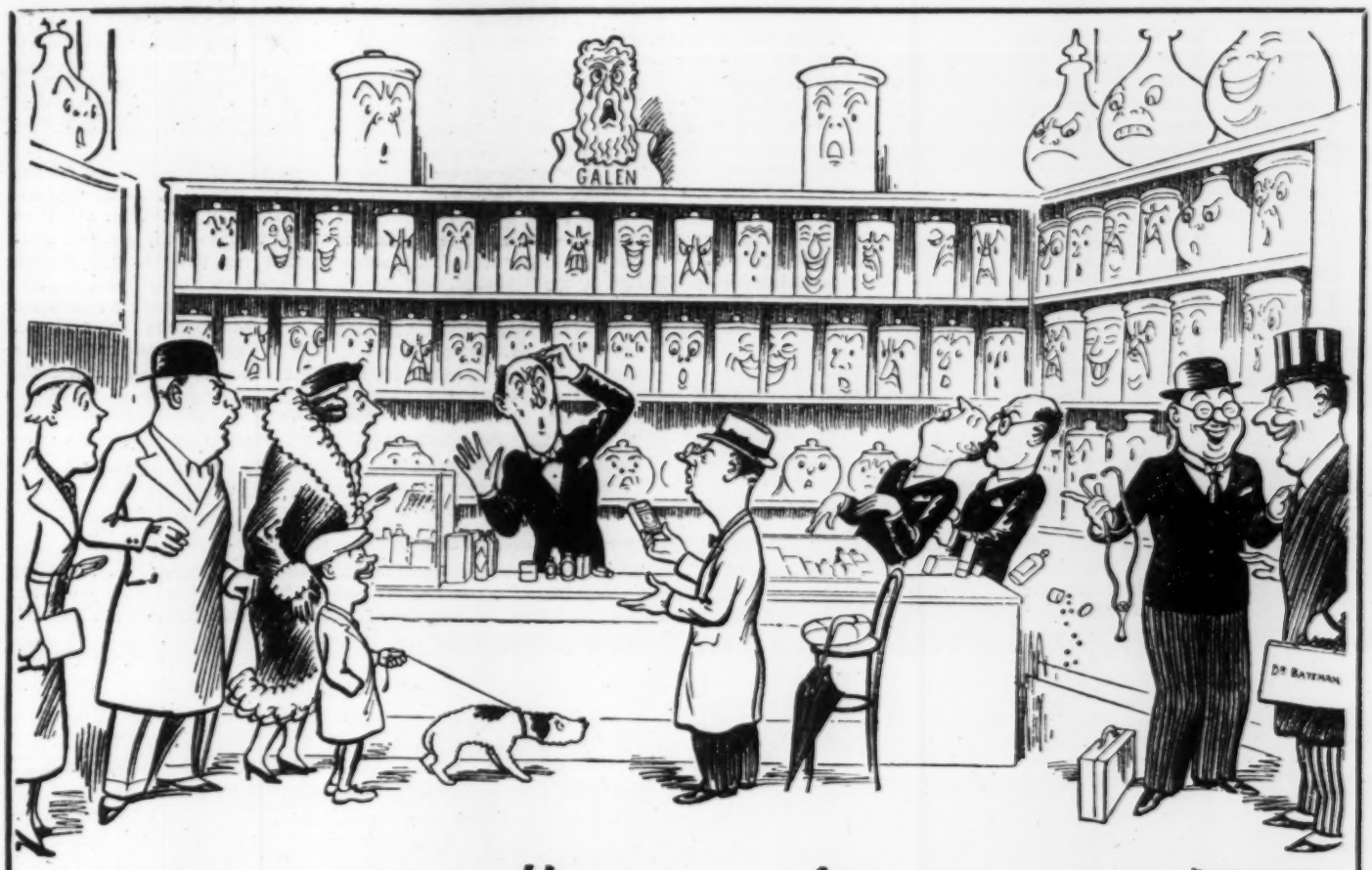
> . . . this house is supposed to be haunted. I have sometimes been worried lest her tales of seeing ghosts should upset my wife. But I am certain that you would never encourage her in these fancies about the "Grey Lady," which I always insist are pure delusions.

The most direct attempt at extrication came from "Almack," who employed a "Caveat Emptor" device by putting "C. E." on the top of his (her) reference. This was smart, and caused me a lot of deep thinking, but finally, with great reluctance, I decided against it. Many of the testimonials would have stiffened the rectorial caution, especially those which made an appeal to his charity and referred to the reformatory opportunities which his order gives. I noticed throughout a distinct tendency to risk the wrath of the Rector rather than the wrath of Sapphire. The domestic episode (which was of a sexual nature whenever specified) must have been more reprehensible than I had imagined. Only one competitor determined to brace up and face exposure. He openly acknowledged that "she swears like a fish-wife, drinks like a fish, and is as light-fingered as a gipsy."

Many failed altogether to make their skim milk masquerade as cream. They would not have deceived a curate. Others sailed straight for Charybdis and got lost in froth.

Of Sapphire herself a fairly clear composite representation appears. In the words of JOAN JUKES, "she is by no means the traditionally heedless hireling, nor the grudging slave of the mere letter." She is clever at picking things up; "she makes good pastry, being singularly light handed and excellent with her sauce" (MARIAN DALE and nearly every lady who entered). "She excels . . . in such matters as washing up the crockery, though . . . it would be well for her to be under the supervision of one with long experience in the more delicate matter of silver" (W. DURELL). "Her sight and hearing are sensitive" (E. J. B.) and she has a particularly retentive memory. "She has always appeared honest" (at least twelve entries); "We have never been able to detect her in any dishonest action" (S. W. GREEN). Although "she fails of that strict self-effacement demanded in ultra rigid households . . . she is well fitted for hard labour" (HARRY BROADBENT). "She deserves a fair trial." "Her taste in literature is remarkable. I have often known her to read biography and letters" (D. T. NEWMAN). She is careful, and always knows where mislaid articles are to be found. She is devoted to her aged mother "whom she visits with unfailing regularity on her free afternoons, generally taking with her some little token of her (and our) affection" (D. McA.). As for her religion, she is ". . . partial to the early Christian doctrine that all things should be shared in common; it is her misfortune that her contribution must, of necessity, be negligible" (GORDON SIMPSON). ROWLAND MARRIOTT in a beautifully composed testimonial was the only competitor to make anything of the Sapphire-Sapphira coincidence.

One or two entries deserved the waste-paper basket; the semi-convincing (and therefore successful) sketches of ROWLAND MARRIOTT, GORDON SIMPSON, JOAN JUKES, and J. F. WARREN achieve the higher level and lie on the table. I recommend that the First Prize go to B. J. R. MORETON and the Second to ALAN SAUVAIN.



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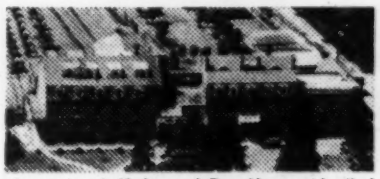

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FIRST PRIZE

DEAR RECTOR,

Our maid, Sapphire, now reluctantly compelled to leave us after having been here for more years than I care to tell, has asked me to recommend her to you. If you only give the girl a chance I am sure you will find her of a taking disposition. On those around her she literally breathes good spirits, of which her supply seems unlimited, and her singing on suitable occasions—she has a natural voice—must be heard to be believed. She speaks her native tongue as she learnt it at her mother's knee, and even on her first arrival there was nothing we could teach her about correct speaking.

It will be of particular interest to you to know that she has strict opinions on religious matters. Particularly unshakeable are her views on the observance of Sunday as a day of rest. But Sapphire is not one of those who put their religion away in a drawer for the remainder of the week. To her every day is a Sabbath.

Sapphire dusts vigorously, moving a lot of dirt which other servants would leave behind, and has experience of china, not a few valuable vases having passed through her hands here. Naturally resourceful, with a dexterous command of language which helps her to tide over many anxious moments, I can best sum up her character by assuring you that I cannot remember a time when Sapphire was not trying.

Yours very sincerely,

B. J. R. MORETON

SECOND PRIZE

Miss Sapphire Alumina has been in my employ for six months and I have very great pleasure in writing in support of her application for a post at the Rectory.

Sapphire is a girl whose many qualities are by no means revealed on first acquaintance. She is most active and very ready to learn all that she can, while she often surprises by the extent of her knowledge. During her stay with us she has not been content merely to carry out the normal duties of her position but has shown a marked interest in almost every phase of our family life. In fact, it would hardly be an exaggeration to say that, in the last six months, we have had scarce a worry in which she has not shared, scarce a trouble that has not been her concern.

It is not her nature to hold secrets from her mistress and I venture to express the opinion that among the most refined and truthful girls of to-day there are few who have her manners and scarce a one who could boast of her sense of honesty, uprightness and straight-dealing.

For this last reason alone, I am convinced that a position for her in the atmosphere of the Rectory would be most suitable.

ALAN SAUVAIN

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 168.—UNCLE'S CAR

By A. G. Stripp

Mr. Markham Stiffley, the Mathematics Master (otherwise known as "Uncle") was haranguing his class, as usual, for not making use of their powers of observation.

"Take another example. You've seen me drive up to the school, I suppose, some hundreds of times. Yet I wonder whether any one of you can tell me the registration number of my car? . . . Just as I expected—not a single boy in the whole class. Well, you can work it out for homework. The letters are the xth, the yth, and the zth letters of the alphabet, and they don't spell an English word. The number is a four-figured pendulum number of amplitude 4; it is the product of the number x, the number y, and the square of the number z. In case there is anyone in the class who cannot remember what a pendulum number is—and I can well believe it—we had better ask Goodchild to give us an example."

"6486, sir; amplitude 2."

"Very good. Bright, another?"

"4714, sir; amplitude 3."

"Excellent."

What is the number of Uncle's car?

PROBLEM 166.—WIENER-SCHNITZEL

The two relevant clues are: (1) "Chinese approach . . . tackling the thing from the other end," and (2) "cycle of Cathay." We start at the right-hand bottom corner, eliminating the letters cyclically:

CATHAY
= 3 1 20 8 1 25

Thus our first letter is S, then C, and so on.

This gives the message at once:

SCHNITZEL TO HAVE ALL TERRITORY WEST OF THE RIVER BOLONEY, WIENER TO KEEP WHAT TERRITORY REMAINS.

"I like to put it on record," writes one solver, "that I did this puzzle at once, and without the help of this week's hints—finding it very easy." Good work.

PROBLEM 165.—AT THE YARD

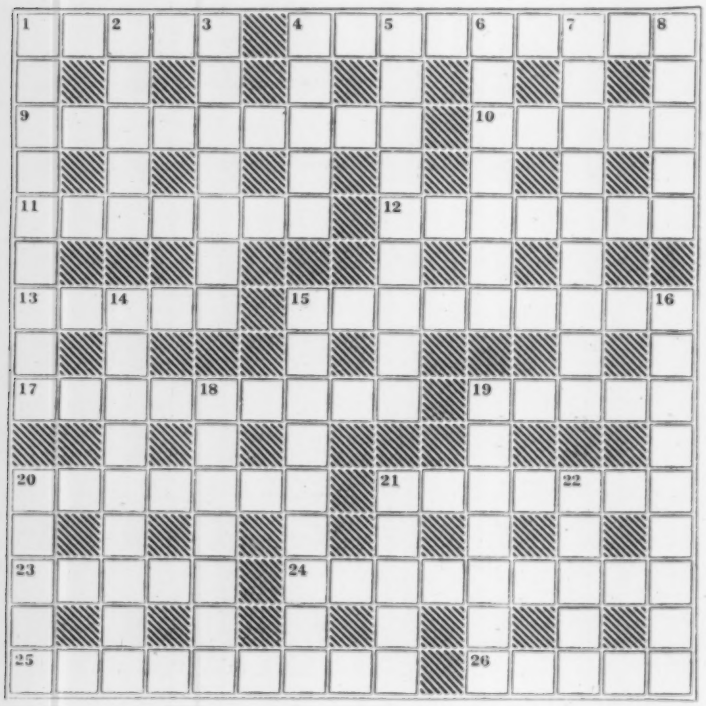
A set of Low's Cartoons goes to J. Banting, 99 Gordon Road, Carshalton.

Six points are awarded.

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 314

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday. Prize-winners should address their claims to the Editor.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
J. Walter Jones, Ynysllynlladd, Cadoston, Neath, Glam.

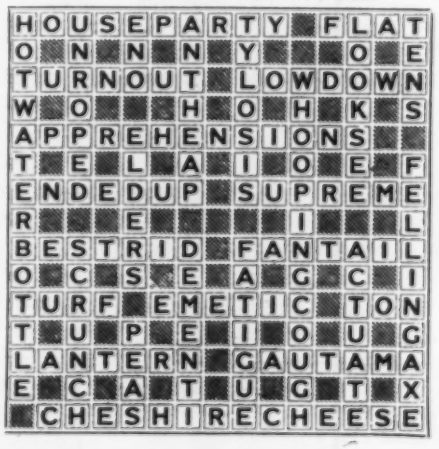
ACROSS

1. Go on one leg.
4. Do you need a pair to play ring tennis?
9. A pressing issue, so to speak.
10. Applies to Country Life.
11. Its fine feathers often help to make fine "birds."
12. One should get a good back view of those who use such seats.
13. In vain the Incas tempted him.
15. This degree of accuracy is nicely achieved.
17. Christmas dish at Queen's College, Oxford.
19. French and English articles for a carpenter.
20. One's ribs stick to it, as it were.
21. Sort of lawn tennis match that's played out?
23. A 50 to 1 state.
24. One must go south from here.
25. Magisterially suggestive of a peer with a corporation.
26. About 1,000 it finishes.

DOWN

1. One h.p. two-seater.
2. It goes under the seat in church.
3. Its undercut is silver.
4. Sound dimension for shipping.
5. Boxing description of the Portland Club.
6. Problem often dealt with in crackers.
7. The passage does not lead to the frontier.
8. How Rose broke the Cape flight record.
14. This is not an opening in the scenery.
15. Odds, actually cash.
16. Describes the filling of a mince-pie.
18. Car light.
19. One could, of course, give a fellow a good hiding with this.
20. Theatrical seat in church.
21. The master could have been ruder.
22. Sometimes contained in a teacup.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



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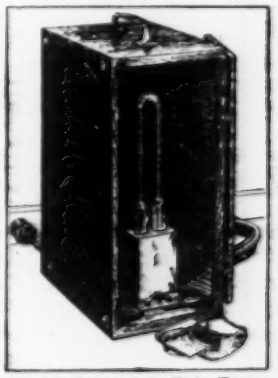

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